

# GOLF COURSE NEWS

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## INSIDE

### Making the switch

Spring Creek Ranch CC is converting its roughs from a fescue blend to Palisades zoysiagrass.....6

### Renovation work

There are many choices when it comes to improving bunker drainage and converting turf.....11



Photo: Freddy Bird

#### MOVIN' ON UP

Ever since the century-old Monterey pine that stood near the 18th green at Pebble Beach Golf Links succumbed to lightning and disease last fall, the plan was to replace it. After searching far and wide for a suitable replacement, the course found one – a 67-foot cypress tree – right on the property. See story on page 3.

#### COURSE MAINTENANCE

CourseCo develops program for inner city kids.....6  
Tools of the Trade at TPC at Four Seasons ..... 7  
New MACH 2 label approved .....10

#### COURSE DEVELOPMENT & RENOVATION

Developer building conservation community ..... 11  
2003 U.S. Open site 11 years in the making ..... 11  
Architect calls for 'good sense' in debate ..... 20

#### COURSE MANAGEMENT

Freedom signs first management agreement ..... 15  
Lottery winner realizes million-dollar dream ..... 15  
Tips for improving super/golf pro relations ..... 15

#### SUPPLIER BUSINESS

SRO to keep on top of turfgrass market ..... 18  
FTC approves Bayer acquisition ..... 18  
Syngenta looks to continue growth ..... 18

PERIODICAL

## POINT

Ron E. Jackson of Meadowbrook Golf and golf industry consultant Michael A. Kahn assess the value of management companies.

Page 4

## COUNTERPOINT

Editorial Focus: Turf & Seed

### Turf Seed forging ahead with naturally Roundup resistant turf

By ANDREW OVERBECK

HUBBARD, Ore. — While it continues to work on transgenic Roundup ready turfgrass, Pure Seed Testing, Turf Seed's research corporation, is also pressing forward with its decade-long effort to develop naturally Roundup resistant turfgrass.

"Ten years ago I asked the marketing guys what they would like to see in the future and they said herbicide resistant grasses," said Pure Seed Testing president Crystal Rose-Fricker. "I decided to start work on Roundup because it was the most accepted herbicide and most usable to kill grassy weeds like Poa annua."

Rose-Fricker has already developed Aurora Gold hard fescue, and Pure Gold and Tomahawk RT tall fescues that tolerate higher than usual rates of Roundup. All three

Continued on page 8



Crystal Rose-Fricker in the field

### Textron continues refocusing efforts

By ANDREW OVERBECK

CHARLOTTE, N.C. — With its manufacturing and engineering facilities mostly consolidated to its Charlotte, N.C., and Ipswich, England, facilities, Textron Golf, Turf and Specialty Products is pushing forward with other initiatives to retool the company.

These ongoing efforts involve condensing product platforms, rolling out a new walk-behind greens mower line and opening a new testing facility that will include a par-3 golf hole. Over the long-term, the company also plans to convert to a build-to-order company instead of a build-to-stock company giving its dealers and distributors more control over inventory and costs.

"Charlotte is the center for turf engineering globally," said Michael Vickers, Textron's new vice president of engineering for turf products. "When we moved here from Racine [Wis.] we assembled a new team of engineers because there were very few people who wanted to transfer down here."

"We ended up with a team that is extremely diverse from both an experience and a industry point of view," he continued. "We have engineers from aircraft, automobile, agricultural and construction."

Continued on page 19



Michael Vickers

### AGC defamation suits proceed in Illinois

By DEREK RICE

GENEVA, Ill. — In late May, Santa Monica, Calif.-based American Golf Corp. (AGC) and disgruntled Eagle Brook Country Club member Tom Doyle finally had their day in court to address lawsuits filed by each side alleging defamation.

AGC alleges that Doyle's Web site that criticizes Eagle Brook is defamatory. Doyle

alleges that he and his wife were defamed when their names were posted at the club as deadbeats. He also claims breach of contract and fraud on the part of AGC-operated Eagle Brook.

At the May 23 hearing, Judge Patrick Dixon set a late-June court date for a preliminary hearing on the suits. At this hearing, both sides will be forced to play all their cards, which is essentially what Doyle said he has been seeking from the beginning.

At issue is the status of maintenance issues at the club, as well as Eagle Brook's insistence that members join a resigning members list and wait for a set number of members to join before existing

Continued on page 16

### Oneidas building on casino, golf successes

By DEREK RICE

ONEIDA, N.Y. — The Oneida Indian Nation has broken ground for construction of the first of two new golf courses to complement its Shenandoah Golf Club at Turning Stone Casino.

"What the nation is looking to do is to shift Turning Stone from a casino that has a golf course to a golf destination that happens to have a casino," said Mark Emery, a spokesman for the Oneida Nation.

The decision to build the two new courses was based on the increased demand for golf in the

area surrounding the casino, Emery said.



The Oneida Indian Nation in New York is building two new golf courses at Turning Point Casino to complement Shenandoah Golf Club, the 12th hole of which is pictured above.

"Golf is very popular here, and people have been thrilled with the

Continued on page 12

## Advanced Turf Solutions merges with Turf Professionals Choice

FISHERS, Ind. — Advanced Turf Solutions and Turf Professionals Choice, two Indianapolis-area distributors, have merged operations under the Advanced Turf Solutions name. The combined company, which focuses on post-patent chemistry, now serves all of Indiana and Kentucky as well as Southern Ohio.

Alex Cannon is the president of the new company and Dan Dunham is vice president of operations. Vic Garcia, the founder of

Turf Professionals Choice, has ownership in the company and serves on the board of directors. Garcia will continue to service his customers in the field and play other key roles in management.

The company distributes a full line of professional turf maintenance products and golf course accessories. Advanced Turf Solutions is headquartered in Fishers where it has a 28,000-square-foot facility. The company also has a smaller facility in Lexington, Kent.

## Textron focus

Continued from page 1

and turf backgrounds. We are taking a fresh look at all of this equipment."

Among the areas being looked at said Vickers are next generation cutting units, alternative power sources, and technology from Textron's other divisions such as Omnicup and Bell Helicopter.

Vickers' first task will be to streamline Textron's product platforms.

"We will whittle down the number of configurations and go to a minimum number of platforms," he said. "For example, we have duplicate platforms in the triplex mowers but we have to target that while retaining functionality for all the markets."

At the same time, Vickers is also working on new products.

"We have the new LF 1880 fairway mower out there right

now and we will be looking at how we can add a greens mower and a trim mower to that new platform," Vickers said. "We will also be concentrating heavily on walk-behind greens mowers because our competition already has an advantage there. The first phase of a new line of walk-behind greens mowers will be announced later this year."

Textron is also ramping up its testing facility at its 270,000 square-foot factory in Charlotte.

"We will have a 24-hour-a-day track for outdoor durability testing and we are also putting in a par-3 hole that will give us all of the elements of the golf course right there at the factory," said Vickers.

The 125-yard hole will have a 6,000 square-foot green, three different tee boxes and will have sand traps and waste bunkers.

"It will give us the capability to look at different aspects of a development program without having

## Syngenta

Continued from previous page

earlier than scheduled.

"You can now use it as a trim and edge product around ponds and lakes and other bodies of water," Pulliam said.

With Bayer's buyout of Aventis approved, Pulliam re-

*"To maintain our top position we have to find new projects and make formulation improvements."*  
— Keelan Pulliam

mains confident that Syngenta will remain on top in the turf and ornamental market.

"Acquisitions and consolidations and mergers have been a big part of this industry in the last five to seven years and as a supplier you learn to deal with it," he said. "We will continue to be number one in turf and ornamentals after the acquisition."

As part of the Aventis acquisition, European Union officials and the U.S. Federal Trade Commission have forced Bayer to shed several insecticide products (see story on previous page). Pulliam said Syngenta might be looking to pick up the pieces.

"We are always interested in opportunities if they present themselves," said Pulliam. ■

to go to a golf course," Vickers said. "It will also allow customers to try out our new products at the factory." ■

## SRO to remain 'vigilant'

Continued from previous page

the market this year as opposed to the incredibly low prices that we saw last year."

Dunn said that he recognizes that many courses have had budgets cut this year, but believes overseeding usage will be about the same as it was last year.

"Some courses may reduce overseeding acreage this year, but I don't think many will forgo overseeding altogether because it is just too risky," he said. "I am not saying that budgets have not come under pressure, but with fewer golfers out there the competition for them will be keener. Courses will find a way [to overseed]."

The construction slowdown doesn't worry Dunn either. "With more renovation work going on we are working on our approach

to smaller projects. Instead of selling 50,000 pounds of seed to one project, it now takes three projects," Dunn said. "So we are stepping up our communication between our tech support agronomists, architects, builders and distributors to try and improve our service on that side."

With Mike Robinson working internationally and on new product development, Dunn is looking forward to continuing SRO's advancement.

"SRO has a good reputation in the business and that is not something you create overnight," said Dunn. "My challenge is to work in a market that is much tougher and to stay vigilant and look for opportunities while working to support the customer and keep them satisfied." ■

## Becker Underwood aligns ops

Continued from previous page

The company now has 27 global sales representatives on three continents.

"The market in the United States is continuing to grow as the market trends toward using integrated pest management practices," Underwood said. "The market in Europe is even stronger because the portfolio of traditional pesticides is really small."


Aware that many superintendents are wary of biological solutions, Underwood is putting emphasis on developing real world product tests.

"We put our superintendents hats on when we do this work," he

said. "Often in when there is research going on in a lab there is more 'r' going on than 'd.' Many things work under perfect conditions. But there aren't perfect conditions in the real world. We are working on provable solutions that give the superintendent value."

Going forward, the company has new products in the both the traditional and biopesticide areas that are getting closer to market.


"One is a biopesticide that will provide superintendents another biological option besides traditional insecticides," Underwood said. "But we are still in development and we are summarizing the data." ■




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