Foliar feeding frenzy

More courses are spot-feeding their greens to reduce the amount of nitrogen used, but more research on efficacy is needed.

BASF packs specialty portfolio

SANTA ANA, Calif. — A group of private investors based in Southern California, including former western operations executive Bobby Heath, acquired Phoenix, Ariz.-based Western Golf Properties Inc., an 18-year-old management and development company, last month. Financial terms were not disclosed.

Carlson leads on county green standards

By ANDREW OVERBECK

VENICE, Fla. — When superintendent Tom Carlson here at The Venice Golf and Country Club achieved Audubon certification, he wasted little time sharing the club’s accomplishments with the surrounding community.

Investors snag Western Golf

New owners move company to Southern California, hand reins to longtime exec. Heath

By DEREK RICE

SANTANA ANA, Calif. — A group of private investors based in Southern California, including former western operations executive Bobby Heath, acquired Phoenix, Ariz.-based Western Golf Properties Inc., an 18-year-old management and development company, last month. Financial terms were not disclosed.

Carlson is restoring natural wetlands at Venice Golf Club.
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To learn more about how you can unwrap the potential of new Pendulum AquaCap, visit www.turffacts.com. Pendulum AquaCap is currently labeled for commercial lawn care and golf course use.
NGCOA conference tackles financing challenge

By DOUG SAUNDERS

PALM SPRINGS, Calif. — As more than 600 golf course owners from the United States and Canada gathered for their annual conference and trade show in late February, there was a noticeable air of trepidation among the assembled group. Last year's triple whammy of post-9/11 jitters, the oversupply of courses and the challenges of a slumping economy all added to the pressures felt by golf course owners nationwide, and it left many wondering what the future held.

But the gathering of 620 members, up from last year's attendance of 550, carried on with many positive messages as the Solutions Summit strived to tackle tough questions and provide answers that owners could implement this year to improve their bottom line.

The theme of the week at the Wyndham Resort retreat in the California desert was emblazoned everywhere: "On the green is good, in the black is better." The five-day event provided a series of seminars that touched on every aspect of golf operations, including financing, golf shop operations, food and beverage management, labor laws and environmental activism.

"I am very pleased with the turnout we have this year, especially considering that attendance at the other two industry trade shows (PGA Merchandise Show and GCSAA Conference and Show) was down," said Phil Tralies, president and CEO of NGCOA. "I think that the realization of the importance of cooperation among all of the golf industry has really come through here this year," NGCOA executive director Mike Hughes said.

That sense of cooperation came through in the opening session, as Phil Tralies, president and CEO of Club Car, stated the simple facts. "For us to be successful, the golf course owners need to be successful. That is why we are strongly committed to this organization and the goals of increasing the bottom line for everyone," Tralies said.

Two of the more pressing issues for the economics of the game of golf, available financing and the lagging number of rounds played, were dealt with in a very open manner.

It is no secret that many of the major funding sources for the golf industry have dried up in the past year and the remaining sources are taking a much harder look at the economics of golf.

"Golf is a difficult business because there are so many moving parts to it. It is not like building a commercial building and leasing it out. With so many variables it is clear that golf doesn't provide the profitability of other commercial investments," Tralies said.

The obvious benefit to vendors is cost savings. Attending one show instead of two not only costs less, but also takes less time.

Tim Ford

This is especially true for companies like Club Car that hit multiple shows to market their product to all players in the industry.

"[Attending four shows in five weeks] really stresses the organization from head to toe — getting product around, getting people around," said Club Car CEO Phil Tralies. "Here's an opportunity for us to be able to consolidate and not incur twice the expense.

For the Toro Co., which recently signed on as a preferred NGCOA vendor, combining shows simplifies its logistics tremendously.

"We are a supporter of this," said Tim Ford, vice president and general manager of Toro's commercial business. "It will bring together two of our primary constituents: the superintendent who uses the equipment and the owner who ultimately signs the check."

Expenses aside, vendors are also excited about being able to get in front of both the superintendent and the owner at one event.

This is especially true for companies that did not previously attend the NGCOA show.

"Although we've always realized that owners are important, we have never gone to their show," said Tom Levey, director of sales for the Raleigh-Durham area of North Carolina.

"Our biggest fear is that depressions will expand in 2003. We have this year, especially considering that attendance is up from last year, Link Up 2 Golf, an industry-supported adult player development initiative, to 26 new markets this year. The planned new markets span 11 PGA sections and will bring the program's reach to 64 facilities in 34 cities and a number of military bases.

Link Up 2 Golf was created in 2001 by Golf 20/20 and tested at eight facilities in the Raleigh-Durham area of North Carolina. The PGA and NGCOA signed on to provide collaborative leadership, management and financial stability to help the program go nationwide in 2002.

Based on feedback from last year, Link Up 2 Golf will be adjusted to include five 90-minute group clinics incorporating on-course instruction on etiquette, speed of play, proper behavior and three supervised lessons.
With spring comes renewed sense of optimism

As I write this, the icy fingers of winter are loosening their grip. The snow is receding. I can see patches of brownish green sward and temperatures are forecasted to reach the 60s this weekend.

This means two things: 1. My wife and I have reached a detente over the proper thermostat setting in our house (for some reason my argument that, "If it was 80 degrees outside you'd be out there wearing shorts," never goes anywhere); 2. A new golf season is on the horizon.

By the time this issue is published, golfers will be peppering superintendents with questions like, "How come this place isn't as green as Augusta?" But you can't have it all. It's spring, and many courses are itching to get back on course.

Although the City of Denver has reopened its courses after closing them due to drought conditions in January, it will clearly take much more than optimism for courses out West to make it through the season.

W

We here at Golf Course News know that superintendents are a creative lot. Now we're going to prove it. In our new monthly feature, SUPERideas, we will showcase a superintendent and their innovative idea (see page 6).

California greens offer many advantages

By Dr. Michael Hurdzan

While I am a great believer in the USGA method of green construction, it is the most highly studied method available, I don't believe there is any one best way to build a golf green and rootzone.

My point of view is a result of 40-plus years of seeing greens built of every imaginable combination of sand, organic matter, inorganic matter and soil, and yet all of them produced acceptable quality putting surfaces for their time and place. Consequently, I have come to believe that if there is indeed a preferred method, it must be the one best suited to any given combination of microclimate, irrigation water source, turfgrass, construction budget, maintenance goal and golfer expectations—and it is not always the USGA method.

However, as we learn more about the complex interactions of the physical, biological and chemical aspects of golf green rootzones, more scientifically sound construction methods or modifications will be found to be successful. One of these is the California method of green construction.

A common misconception is that any 100 percent sand green is a California green, and that is simply not true. The difference is the particle size of the sand used for construction. California greens (which fall within a very narrow range of particle size distribution) and USGA greens fall within a wider range of particle size distribution. So you cannot take sand that is good for USGA greens and deem it suitable for use in California green construction without lab testing.
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USGA greens have 40 years of success

Continued from previous page

Managing them were born. This year marks the 50th anniversary of the Green Section Turf Advisory Service. During that period, USGA agronomists have visited thousands of courses with greens built to every method imaginable. While we have seen many greens fail due to poor construction techniques, we simply have never seen green failure due to problems with the USGA method itself. True, even USGA greens are rebuilt periodically, but this is to obtain new architecture, convert to better grasses, and/or to correct layering that occurs through mismanagement. As a result of the USGA green has more than 40 years of outstanding success and performance to its credit. No other method or modification can come close to this track record.

VIABILITY

The original 1960 USGA guidelines were revised and republished in 1965, 1973, 1982, 1989 and 1993. If the method is so good, why constantly change it? The USGA constantly reviews its recommendations to make certain the same method keeps up with the many new challenges of green maintenance. Consider just a few of the changes in golf course maintenance over the past few decades. Lower cutting heights, increased play, poorer quality water and greater golfer expectations all place additional demands on greens. To meet these challenges, and keep the method viable, the USGA funds the largest turfgrass research effort in the world. A significant portion of this research is directed toward learning more about green construction. As insights are gained, they are evaluated by an international committee of experts representing all aspects of golf, including architects, superintendents, agronomists, builders and turfgrass scientists. This effort has not only resulted in better USGA greens, it has helped reduce costs both in construction and maintenance.

DOCUMENTATION

The USGA guidelines are extensively documented. If you choose to follow the method, you will have no problem finding plenty of information regarding all aspects of the construction process. In addition to step-by-step guidelines, the USGA and others have published extensive quality control procedures. Sand and gravel plants, as well as other material suppliers, recognize the USGA method as the standard for green construction and thus strive to ensure their products meet the specifications outlined in the guidelines. Physical soil testing laboratories use protocols developed for testing USGA greens mixes. And like the method itself, these procedures are the subject of USGA-sponsored research to improve them and better meet the demands of our increasingly litigious society.

With all this going for USGA greens, why build anything else? The most common response is that they cost too much to build. The USGA recognizes that one of the greatest challenges facing golf is affordability, and a key component of this is the cost of course construction. There are many ways to build more affordable golf courses reduce the number of bunkers, reduce fairway acreage in favor of rough and/or naturalized areas, and reduce the number and severity of features, which in turn will reduce the amount of dirt moved during construction.

In terms of reducing greens construction cost, why not reduce severe contouring so 5,000-square-foot greens can provide enough hole locations to make 7,000-square-foot greens unnecessary. Smaller greens that restore fairway acreage in favor of spaces that have receive plenty of light, air movement and have multiple entrance and exit points will always out perform the larger green lacking such conditions.

How about learning to use the range provided within guidelines when it comes to rootzone materials? The unfortunate tendency within the industry to demand rootzones that drain in excess of 12 inches per hour has resulted in many locally available sands being ignored in favor of sands that have to be shipped from miles away, and therefore cost much more. How about recognizing that USGA greens drain wonderfully without mechanical pumping systems that drive the cost of construction through the roof and are unnecessary on a properly built green? Leaving organic matter out of the rootzone to save money makes no sense if you then add tons of far more expensive inorganic amendments and a witches brew of products with little or no scientific credibility. Leaving out the gravel layer saves money upfront but research indicates that without this layer, moisture levels vary widely. Money saved on gravel may be spent many times over in hand watering.

The method believes strongly in the USGA method. The method is historically and scientifically proven, is constantly undergoing improvement to ensure it remains viable, and it is extensively documented. And while you can build greens more cheaply, we feel strongly the advantages of the USGA green make it the better value by far. These are the main reasons it is the most widely used method throughout the world.

James Francis Moore is the Director of the USGA Green Section's Construction Education Program.

California method has its place

Continued from previous page

For California greens, 90 to 100 percent of the particles must be between 0.1 and 1.0 mm and 50 to 70 percent of it should fall within the 0.3 to 2.5 mm range. This allows for consistent performance, the sand stays very stable in the rootzone mix and it has a predictable air flow and water holding capacity. Before deciding which type of greens construction to use, my approach is to identify possible problem sources and select a rootzone with the most stress combating physical properties. Is it USGA, California, or some well thought-out modification of one? Factors that would cause me to lean more toward the California method include water quality problems, cation exchange capacity (C.E.C.), reduced water use, better air flow and cost. One important factor is water quality. Although USGA greens drain more quickly than California greens, California greens drain more thoroughly. Therefore, water that may be high in salts or bicarbonates, or have a high S.A.R. will keep moving through the profile. In addition, the California green will initially have a low C.E.C. meaning less buildup of aluminum, sodium, other cation salts(s). The old myth that California greens need more water is just that, a myth, for research has shown that California greens move water more slowly through the rootzone than the USGA method, and so they use less. This also means slower or less leaching of materials from the rootzone.

Recent research has also shown that pure sand has better air flow than sand amended with organic matter, which is a plus if an air exchange system is planned. The best system for air movement is a USGA green, but with any organic material blended in. And yes, the USGA recommendations allow for pure sand, with zero organic amendment.

Cost is often a significant factor in green construction, with California greens costing much less than the USGA method or variations thereof. The reason, of course, is that once sand has passed by laboratory criteria for California construction, it is hauled directly from the sand source to the green with no cost involved for a gravel blanket or amending the sand with organic matter. The difference can be in excess of several hundred thousand dollars on a 18-hole golf course, which might be better spent for an upgraded irrigation system or more sod.

There is no magic to the California construction method, but rather it is plain old plant and soil science. The fact that California greens are easier to build and cost less are secondary factors, however, because in many site specific situations they simply perform better than other methods.

Dr. Michael J. Hurdzan, ASGCA, is head of Hurdzan/Fry Golf Course Design in Columbus, Ohio.
IGM PROMOTES FOUR
CHAMPIONS GATE, Fla. — International Golf Maintenance (IGM), has promoted four superintendents to regional positions. Both Paul Haines and Bill Seigle were promoted to regional superintendents within the state of Florida. In addition to his responsibilities at The Eagles GC, Haines will oversee four other properties. Seigle, superintendent, is responsible for overseeing four clubs in the Florida panhandle. Tyler Minamyer and Jeff Miller are regional superintendents representing East Coast markets for IGM. Minamyer is now IGM’s Mid-Atlantic regional superintendent, overseeing six clubs in the southern Virginia area. As IGM’s new Southeast regional superintendent, Miller oversees four properties while fulfilling his duties as superintendent at the Golfers’ Club at Fort McPherson (Ga.).

HANKS JOINS VALLEYCREST
CALABASAS, Calif. — Larry A. Hanks has joined the team of ValleyCrest Golf Course Maintenance as business development manager for the Southeast/Gulf Coast region. In his new position, Hanks will be responsible for the acquisition of new maintenance contracts and spearheading industry awareness of ValleyCrest Golf throughout the area. In addition, he will support the efforts of ValleyCrest Golf superintendents and existing clients. Prior to joining the company, Hanks served as sales director for OneSource Landscape and Golf Services Inc.

MTF APPOINTS SMITH
LANSING, Mich. — The Michigan Turfgrass Foundation (MTF) has appointed Thomas M. Smith as its new executive director. Smith spent the last year as the assistant executive director and has served nine years on the MTF’s board of directors. In his almost 30 years of industry-related experience Smith has worked in the golf industry and been a research and teaching assistant at Michigan State University.

ValleyCrest signs Somerset GC
LOCUST GROVE, Va. — ValleyCrest Golf Course Maintenance has signed an agreement to perform golf course grow-in and long-term golf course maintenance for Somerset Golf Club here. Under the agreement, ValleyCrest will provide turnkey grow-in and maintenance services for the 18-hole daily-fee golf club. The addition of this facility increases the company’s maintenance portfolio to 43 and is its first contract in Virginia.

Situated 15 miles west of Fredericksburg, Somerset Golf Club was originally built in 1996, and is currently undergoing extensive course renovation to all of its greens, tees, bunkers and several complete holes. Architect Rick Robbins of Robbins & Associates Inc., Cary, N.C., completed the redesign and is overseeing the work. The course features bluegrass and ryegrass tees and fairways with fescue roughs and bentgrass greens. The layout is due to reopen in June.

“The ValleyCrest team has
Continued on page 8

SUPER Ideas
Farley’s ‘dead ringer’ keeps tree bases neat

One of the first things I did when I arrived at Tea Bend Golf Club was spray the tree bases for weeds. Nothing can bring down the looks of an otherwise tidy course than weeds and scrappy grass at the base of trees. In order to help my spray technician apply herbicide in a perfect circle of consistent size I fabricated a simple device. For lack of a better name I call it the ‘dead ringer.’

It simply consists of a steel hook and a piece of rope with a loop on the end. The steel hook is hooked around the tree and the end of the paint gun goes in the loop. Then all you do is pull the rope tight and pull the trigger as you walk around the tree, painting a perfect circle. You just have to decide how large of a diameter you prefer around your tree bases.

Continued on page 9
By ANDREW OVERBECK

GREENWOOD, Ind. — While many courses across the country are using effluent water, superintendent Ben Rink is breaking new ground here at Hickory Stick Golf Club by using treated wastewater from the local water utility as an irrigation source.

When Rink arrived on site in April 2000, the Tim Liddy course was just being flagged for irrigation. The only problem was finding enough water to irrigate with. Groundwater, usually abundant in the Midwest, was scarce because the property sits on top of a rock formation that sucks all the water too deep. With well-drilling out of the question financially, the developers and Rink turned to Bargersville Utilities to see if they could tap into its treatment plant.

This proved a chore since state officials had no regulations on the effluent delivery methods on the golf courses. Connecting a pipe directly to the treatment plant was forbidden because state officials said the effluent would be considered sludge when it got to the course. Eventually, Rink and Bargersville Utilities agreed. They installed a well, and all of a sudden there was enough water to flush those.

"I have to call them and tell them to turn the pumps on and they run it for eight hours to fill the lagoon back up," he said. "Eventually we'll put a switch in my pump house that will have floats to turn the pumps on and off automatically."

While Rink learned about effluent delivery methods on the fly, he also faced a steep learning curve when it came to using the wastewater for irrigation. "I have not become an expert yet," he said. "I know the quality of the stuff in my ponds is not that great and the effluent is not a whole lot different. I have terrible soil here and that is compounded by high bicarbonate levels, pH and salts in the effluent."

Rink's biggest challenge has been delivering nutrients to the turfgrass. "Hickory Stick paid to have five miles of six-inch pipe put in, and the utility paid for the pump and the lagoon," said Rink of the compromise solution. "We pay $4.00 per 1,000 gallons, which covers the electrical and maintenance costs. While a well would be ideal, this is far cheaper than a well or being on city water."

As it stands, the current water delivery method is rather crude, said Rink. "I have to call them and tell them to turn the pumps on and they run it for eight hours to fill the lagoon back up," he said. "Eventually we'll put a switch in my pump house that will have floats to turn the pumps on and off automatically."

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Rink tests effluent waters at Hickory Stick Golf Club

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"Eventually we'll put a switch in my pump house that will have floats to turn the pumps on and off automatically," said Rink. "However, with new owners coming in this season, Rink is optimistic that things will turn around and the agronomic problems will be solved."

"We were using this water for a couple of years and getting away with it, and then all of a sudden we were using twice the fertilizer and we were in trouble," he said. "With the new owners in place, I hope we can get an acid injection system so we can lower the pH and get rid of the bicarbonates."

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Rink would also like to work with the state in standardizing regulations for the use of effluent water on golf courses. "We use effluent because it is convenient, but it is better for the environment," he said. "There are plenty of courses that have bad quality wells so it is an option to consider. I also think it is a matter of time before courses are required to use alternate water sources and treatment plants seem to be a good fit."
Organic fertilizer makers expand
Continued from page 6

change the way courses use organic products. In addition to its customized line of Bio Basics liquid fertilizer and ZeoPro soil amendment, Bio Basics has teamed up with Purdue Agricycle Inc. to take pasteurized dry poultry waste (DPW) and turn it into golf course grade fertilizer.

Basics makes a straight DPW product and also combines it with air-ground carbons and sugars to enhance nutrient uptake and growth. The Enhanced DPW can also be mixed with synthetic fertilizer to provide higher nutrient analysis.

On the liquid side, Bio Basics offers leaf tissue analysis so superintendents know exactly which nutrients the turf is getting.

Rick Holanda, superintendent at Aronimink Golf Club in Newtown, Pa., which is holding this year's Senior PGA Championship, uses both the DPW and the liquid fertilizer products.

"The DPW is a good granular product for roughs, bunker banks and green surrounds. I use it in the spring and fall," said Holanda. "I have been using the liquid product for several years, however. The turf tissue analysis allows you to control the nutrients in your greens. Every 14 days I take a look and see what is being over-applied or what is deficient, then I tweak the next application."

Davisson said Bio Basics is in the process of signing five distributors this year and will eventually have 15 to 20 distributors across the country.

DEVELOPING HIGH-NITROGEN FERTILIZER

EcoOrganics is taking a similar approach to market by expanding distribution, but it has come up with a high-nitrogen organic fertilizer that it said could be used 100 percent on greens.

The EcoOrganics product line is based on soy trypicase broth, which is used in laboratories to grow bacteria.

"Trypticase broth is 90 percent isolated soy protein," said Dr. Bill Torello, vice president of marketing for EcoOrganics and an associate professor of plant and soil sciences at the University of Massachusetts. "They're not recyclable waste products, they are food- and animal-grade proteins, very safe and very clean.

"Our premier product is a 15-2-0. That's a very strong nitrogen level. There is 15 percent organic nitrogen here. It's not a bridge product. There is no soluble in it, no urea — it is 100 percent organic," added Torello.

The product has also been shown to increase microbial activity in the soil profile, releasing another form of natural fertilizer material.

The fertilizer is available as a wettable powder for spray applications and can also be used as the sole source of nitrogen for greens fertilization programs. According to Torello, on-course testing has shown excellent results at application rates between 1/24 to 1/4 of a pound per 1,000 square feet.

EcoOrganics has also developed a greens-grade granular 11-2-3 product, which has the consistency of sand. It can also be used as a topdress, roughs and tees.

"Classically, the problem with organics is that they are low in nutrient content, particularly nitrogen," said Torello. "With the advent of this product, you can have the 100 percent organic management of greens."
MAINTENANCE

Foliar feeding is the rage, but more research is needed

Continued from page 6

have used this approach on tee surfaces and, of late, fairways. The ability to spray these materials at a greater frequency, while using extremely low rates, has shown great benefits to turfgrass health. This type of approach can't be accomplished with traditional granular fertilizers.

When it comes to greens fertilizer programs, there is no true standard in today's industry. It is certainly a matter of experience and preference of the individual superintendent. The general program that seems to be emerging in popularity is one or two granular applications, usually in the spring and/or fall, and a spoon-feeding approach for the remaining months. For example, to calculate the total nitrogen of this type of program, it might be a spring and fall application at 0.5 #N/M of a granular material, and applications of soluble/liquids at a rate of 0.1 #N/M every 10 days throughout the season. In an approximate seven-month growing season, this nitrogen total is in the 2.5 #N/M range.

However, along with the amazing popularity of spoon-feeding, questions are being raised regarding the efficacy of foliar feeding. What are the maximum amounts of nutrients that the plant can absorb through the leaf tissue? Does the type of nitrogen matter? How much is lost to volatilization?

There has been very little research done on foliar feeding of turfgrass. In the agriculture industry, foliar research has been conducted for many years. The initial work that has been done indicates that a maximum of 0.1-0.125 of #N/M may be absorbed through the foliage. Research has shown that about 30 percent of the material is absorbed during the first hour after spraying, then 25 percent will be absorbed during the next 24 to 48 hours, and the remaining will most likely be lost. This will also vary depending on mowing and irrigation schedules. Research has also shown that water pH of the spray mix and type of nitrogen used will greatly influence how much is absorbed by the plant. A tank mix with high water pH has the potential to convert the nitrogen to the ammonium form and have a high volatilization potential. Nitrogen compounds that are positively charged can also be absorbed electrically by the plant cells, whereas negatively charged nitrogen compounds cannot.

So what does all this mean for the industry? Even though foliar feeding has become the rage of greens fertilization programs, there are still many questions that remain to be answered from a scientific basis. Research needs to be conducted to answer the questions that are being asked. Only time will tell if foliar feeding will become the standard method of fertilization.

Farley's SUPERidea

Continued from page 6

Most of my trees are young and have trunk sizes of around six to 12 inches and are generally 10 to 20 feet tall. For those trees I use a section of rope one and a half feet long, giving me a ring of three feet across. This is proportionally correct and gives the mowers ample room to work, allowing them to stay away from the tree's base.

When it comes to the native valley oaks, I like to come all the way out to the drip line of the tree's outer canopy. In fact the course's EIR (Environmental Impact Report) requires us to keep all turf and irrigation away from those particular trees. For those situations I pull a section of rope out to the drip line and boom, there's my radius.

—John Farley, superintendent, Teal Bend Golf Club, Sacramento, Calif.

Got a SUPERidea of your own? Email your ideas to editor Andrew Overbeck at aoverbeck@golfcoursenews.com. If your idea is selected for publication, we'll send you a Golf Course News golf shirt.
**BRIEFS**

**MACCURRACH RENOVATING NEW ORLEANS CC**

JACKSONVILLE, Fla. — MacCurrach Golf Construction Inc. began its renovation of the New Orleans Country Club in January. The project, which should wrap up by mid-summer, is in conjunction with architect Bobby Weid, who recommended a complete redo. The course will be re-grassed with an updated infrastructure to include drainage, irrigation, car paths, tees, greens and bunkers. The project also includes the removal of several large trees to expose and preserve the larger heritage live oaks that line the course. Sand from a horse track that existed prior to the course’s construction in the early 1900s is being used to cap some of the muck soils on the site.

**JACOBSON GEARS UP FOR BUSY YEAR**

LIBERTYVILLE, Ill. — Golf course architect Rick Jacobson has signed on for a number of projects in 2003, including two design projects with Jack Nicklaus — the Americana Bayside Resort in Sussex County, Del., and South Market Golf Club in Prince William County, Va. In addition, Jacobson has groundbreaking projects in Wisconsin and Virginia, openings in Illinois and New York, and several renovation projects.

**TURNER CONSTRUCTION TO RENOVATE TWO**

GAITHERSBURG, Md. — T. A. Turner Construction Services Inc. has been awarded construction contracts in Virginia and Bradenton. The company will perform renovation work along with Palmer Design Company on the Palmer Signature Course at Keswick Club in Keswick, Va. Turner will also take on an extensive renovation of the Great Barn, designed by the Conquistador Country Club Club in Bradenton, Fla. At Keswick, the renovation will add 400 yards to the course, while the El Conquistador renovation involves installing a new irrigation system and expanding the course’s irrigation ponds.

**MacCurrach Golf Construction Inc.**

**RenoNEO**

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**New Orleans Country Club**

By DEREK RICE

In the last year, the debate over technology in golf has intensified, with the American Society of Golf Course Architects calling for more regulation of golf equipment in order to keep golf course length and by extension costs, from spiraling out of control.

Pete Dye has seen a lot of changes in his more than 40 years designing courses, including technology. Never one to temper his opinions, during a panel discussion at the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America conference in Atlanta, Dye appealed to the USGA and other organizations to take a more hands-on approach to regulating technologies.

"[The industry] needs to get together and try to stop the golf ball for the great players," Dye said. "This hitting a golf ball 400 yards is ridiculous. You can't make golf courses 8,000 yards long. With the environment and the costs — it's crazy."

Dye said one solution would be having two sets of rules — one for professional golfers and another for the average golfers who make up the vast majority of the golfing population.

"The ball's going farther for the good player, but they're not going any farther for Mabel Smith, who tees off on Tuesday morning and hits the ball 135 yards. Not one ball today goes one inch farther than the ball they made 50 years ago," he said. "So Martha Burk ought to be yelling at the golf ball manufacturers that they're discriminating against some seniors."
Augusta uncrowned

Continued from previous page

and co-designed by Dr. Alistair Mackenzie were, as Horton Smith said, "a cause of character, individuality and personality." Over the years, modest changes were inserted into the original design. In recent years, cosmetic changes became common but remained modest. The most significant changes evolved as the standards of maintenance improved. The growth of turfgrass maintenance, agronomic knowledge and equipment sophistication led to the recent years' "immaculate perfection" standards — not a blade of grass unkempt.

Of the four recognized major golf tournaments of the year, only the Masters is played year after year at the same venue. This continuity of site helped enhance the legend of famous players, famous holes, famous shots and famous victories. Past shots and past scores could fairly be compared and certainly were. These past glories are obsolete now.

Throughout the years, the basic playing character was more or less true to the original design and the founders' original intent. The continuum was in place. Now, in an effort to counter or defend against recent technological advances by club and ball manufacturers, as well as the unique ability of Tiger Woods, Augusta is undergoing a vigorous redesign that has dramatically changed many of the holes. Where now are the continuum, the tradition and the playing link to the course Jones and Mackenzie produced? In fact, if Jones or Mackenzie were alive today, they would not recognize the Augusta National of 2003. Whatever great shots, superlative putting-putts or grand Sunday afternoon final nine charges that were the stuff of legends and so faithfully documented will not now be a continuum and link to past performances. The new course may well look like another Tom Fazio course, one of many, but not one of one. Lengthening and moving tees, bunkers and approach shots bring new golf not directly comparable with Masters tournaments of 2001 or before. Growing a "second cut" or semi-rough to hinder slightly wayward tee shots removes the long and proud distinction of not having rough at the Masters. Adding instant trees surely has altered how some of the holes were previously played. It is different now.

Will Augusta National still be automatically ranked as one of America's truly great courses or is it now actually one of several long, demanding courses set into surrounding woodlands? Augusta was never a course of unique natural setting or spectacular and memorable vistas. The pine forest actually became more claustrophobic as trees grew taller and wider and were joined by new additions of trees. The glory was in the link to a historic source of original design and a masterful management of the early legends. While the "splendor, splendor, splendor everywhere" will return, it will surely be difficult now to claim the legacy or compare the scoring traditions of earlier Masters. From 2003, it is a new course, a new tournament and a new record to establish. Will Augusta National again warrant its lofty stature based upon its illustrious heritage? Perhaps not. Perhaps now Augusta National will be another rolling, long, pine tree-lined course with nice spring flowers that merely hosts a prominent tournament and still provides enviable immaculate perfection in turfgrass management. While modern technological advances are helping the individual golfer's length of play, technology is doing nothing for the memories and traditions of golf, which are too few as it is.

Construction slowdown

Continued from previous page

Ronald W. Cream is the founder of Santa Rosa, Calif.-based Golfplan, which he founded in 1972.

Feed Your Greens the High-Protein Diet

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Black Hills find green
Continued from page 1
Club scheduled to open this year in Agar. "Sutton Bay is just a beautiful golf course," Farris said. "It sits on what used to be a 30,000-acre ranch, so they won't have any development anywhere around them."
The development of quality golf courses in South Dakota may lead to a greater influx of tourists, Farris said, but there is no formal plan underway to draw them. He said he hopes golf will complement two of the state's already strong tourist attractions: Mount Rushmore and pheasant hunting.
"I was always surprised that golf was not as promoted. Granted, people don't look at South Dakota and think, 'What a weather Mecca,'" Farris said. "We have a tremendous amount of pheasant hunting that takes place here. People fly in from all over just to come pheasant hunting here, so Sutton Bay will have a hand in that."
"There's also three million people who come out here to visit Mount Rushmore every year," he added. "Red Rock is about 15 minutes away. I just don't think people have really marketed it."
While the private Sutton Bay will offer hunting, fishing and a sporting clay course based out of its lodge accommodations, Red Rock will offer $27 green fees, which Farris described as a steal.
"There's something for everybody here," he said.

Sunday River course
Continued from page 10
its neighboring New England states. Jones designed the course at Sugarloaf/USA, which is also owned by Sunday River's parent company, American Skiing Co. In a statement, Jones expressed his pleasure that the course would go forward.
"I am so pleased to hear that the Sunday River golf course is going to be completed. In the initial design phase we were delighted to find that the terrain was terrific and well-suited for golf with a lot of similarities between the land and nearby Sugarloaf Golf Course," Jones said. "I know this will be a great golf course with fairways that are a little wider, more forgiving and player-friendly. We think it's a great venue and look forward to the first round."
Harris Golf will oversee construction at the course, while Ty Butler in Jones' Charlotte, N.C., office will make occasional visits to the course during the development.
Golf Course News will continue to follow this project as it progresses in our backyard. Look for updates on the construction in future issues.

Dye blasts changes in design, technology
Continued from page 10
against all those women who play the golf courses every Tuesday morning."
Dye also said many golf course developers start off on the wrong foot when building golf courses. According to Dye, too many owners and developers try to cut costs by not hiring a superintendent until after construction and sometimes grow-in are complete. Dye said ideally, a superintendent should be on-site long before groundbreaking.
"Hell, they should be there before I get there," he said. "The developers who start these things, they don't have any knowledge about what they're doing. They always think they can save $3.75 by letting the contractor run around out there, screwing up the golf course. Then they wait until after we're gone and bring the poor guy in there blind and he's trying to fix all the mistakes. You can sympathize with them a little bit because they don't know."
However, Dye said he wouldn't refuse a job simply because the developer hadn't yet hired a superintendent.
"I go in and say, 'Look, you should have a golf course superintendent,'" he said. "He can fire me anytime he wants to, and a lot of them have."
When it comes to bunker placement in his designs, Dye said his philosophy has changed over the years, mainly because he has designed so many TPC and other tournament courses. Today's players, he said, have more or less perfected their bunker play.
"I used to put all my bunkers real tight to the greens, but they can get in there and beat us up," he said. "I started putting more in there, and the Ball won't kick farther away and make a longer bunker shot to the green."

Architect Ron Farris said Sutton Bay is the crown jewel among the courses set to open in South Dakota this year.

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GOLF COURSE NEWS
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Golf Courses Completed
2002 Projects Completed
- Adios Golf Club, Coconut Creek, FL
- Admirals Cove Golf Club, Jupiter, FL
- Boca Bend Golf Course, Gadsden, AL
- Costa Canie Resort and Country Club, Punco, Puerto Rico
- Delray Dunes Golf and Country Club, Boynton Beach, FL
- Harmony Golf Course, St. Cloud, FL
- Old Hickory Golf Club, Woodbridge, VA

Large Builder of the Year
Quality Grassing & Services, Inc.
Lithia, Florida • Howard Barnes, President
2002 Projects Completed
- Adios Golf Club, Coconut Creek, FL
- Admirals Cove Golf Club, Jupiter, FL
- Boca Bend Golf Course, Gadsden, AL
- Costa Canie Resort and Country Club, Punco, Puerto Rico

Small Builder of the Year
Glase Golf, Inc.
Bonita Springs, Florida • Jim Glase, President
2002 Projects Completed
- Bay Colony Golf Club, Naples, FL
- Quail Creek Country Club, Naples, FL
- Tiburon Golf Club, Naples, FL

Congratulations Its 2002 Builders of the Year
KemperSports comes back to Harding Park

Company also takes over management for three former Gotham Golf Partners courses following lender’s foreclosure.

By DEREK RICE

NORTHBROOK, Ill. — Two years after bowing out of negotiations with the San Francisco Recreation and Park Commission, KemperSports Management has agreed to manage the city’s Harding Park Golf Course.

The company also assumed management of three former Gotham Golf Corp.-managed properties for commercial lender ORIX Capital Markets LLC, which reacquired the courses in lieu of foreclosure.

The Harding Park deal culminates a turbulent four years in the course’s history, which saw two management companies back out of deals (Arnold Palmer Golf Management was the other one) and several false starts in attempts to give the course a much-needed facelift.

KemperSports pulled out in 2001 because of what it said were unrealistic expectations on the part of the city. According to Steve Skinner, KemperSports president, the city’s desire to have the renovation project privately funded made any deal nearly impossible to complete.

“The last time it came up, they wanted a private developer to come in and pay for the improvements, and then lease it from them. But they also wanted resident rates to be very affordable and have 60 percent of the tee times go to residents,” Skinner said. “The numbers never really worked to get private investment in and still have such a favorable rate for the residents.”

At that time, KemperSports

Private Club Network collects awards, adds ChampionsGate

By DEREK RICE

MANHATTAN, Kan. — Private Club Network, a reciprocal play network for private country clubs, has signed an agreement with the Meadowbrook Golf-managed ChampionsGate Resort in ChampionsGate, Fla.

Under the agreement, which is the company’s second foray into the central Florida market, Private Club Network’s more than 30,000 members will receive special pricing at the resort’s two courses as a supplemental benefit to their reciprocal private club privileges.

Steve Graves founded Private Club Network in 1999, and formally introduced its service in May 2002. The concept for the network developed out of Creative Golf Marketing, which Graves began in 1990 to help clubs grow their membership levels.

In its 13 years in business, Creative Golf Marketing has helped a number of clubs reverse their declining membership trends. One of those clubs is Riverside Golf and Country Club in Portland, Ore., which was able to realize a major turnaround in a very short time.

In less than 45 days, we went from 484 members—with over 200 those on a waiting list awaiting refunds—to full membership at 500,” said Bill Johnson, president of Riverside. “Additionally, we cleared the list awaiting refunds and we now have 13 prospects on a waiting list join. All that during an economy in the state with the nation’s highest unemployment figure.”

In 2002, Creative Golf Marketing generated more than $15 million in initiation fee and dues income for its clients, Graves said. The industry is also taking notice—Continued on page 15

Heritage Golf acquires two west, bring the company’s portfolio of courses to 10. The remaining eight courses are located in California, Georgia and Florida.

Bob Husband, president and CEO of Heritage, said the two courses were a perfect fit for his company’s operational philosophy.

“Both Washington National and Trophys Lake are premium golf properties, and we are

Troon adds seven courses in six months

SCOTTSDALE, Ariz. — The first quarter of 2003 has brought a flurry of activity for golf course management company Troon Golf, with the signing of several properties.


Combined with the addition of three facilities in the fourth quarter of 2002, and it’s been a busy six months for Troon.

In addition, the company also kicked off the third year of its Troon Rewards program. The frequency program offers frequent Troon customers benefits as a bonus for their loyalty. Among these rewards are free rounds of golf, bonus miles from Troon’s airline partners and discounts on golf and merchandise.

Through the opening of the Mahoney Instruction Club at Talking Stick, Troon’s director of education Tim Mahoney founded the new Tim Mahoney Golf Academy. Mahoney’s academy will operate under the umbrella of the Troon Golf Institute, and will complement Troon’s other golf instruction schools, among them Resort Golf Schools at Legend Trail Golf Club in Scottsdale and Golf Digest Schools located at a number of Troon’s properties. — Derek Rice

Continued on next page

Continued on next page
Western Golf sold

company said its long-term focus will continue to be on driving revenue at the property level, while assuming a more aggressive growth strategy. Part of this strategy is to take equity positions in deals as the right opportunities present themselves.

"We understand how the golf business has changed over the last few years. Owners need partners in their business, in addition to operators," Heath said. "We intend to focus our growth on course owners who want long-term vision and support from an established, sound business network."

The exact reasons behind the sale are not clear, but Western Golf is currently one of the defendants, along with Thunderbirds Golf Course in Phoenix, in a pending $20 million lawsuit filed by the family of 15-year-old Nils Beeman. Beeman died last July after contracting a virus suspected to be linked to water-handling procedures at Western Golf-managed Thunderbirds. Last August, 84 people in Maricopa County contracted the Norwalk Virus, with the common denominator being the water at Thunderbirds. In November, the medical examiner’s office determined the cause of Beeman’s death was asphyxia due to vomiting caused by the virus, making him the lone casualty of the outbreak. His death led to widespread changes in the way water is handled on golf courses, not only locally, but nationwide. However, the negative press generated by the incident led to severely decreased rounds at the course, which was sold to a pair of local businessmen for $4.8 million in a foreclosure auction last December (GCN, Feb. 2003).

Western Golf first became affiliated with Thunderbirds prior to its opening in 2001. The company served as a construction consultant for the course, which was designed by PGA Tour Design Services Inc. with cooperative efforts of local professional golfers Tom Lehman, Howard Twitty and Billy Mayfair.

Intrawest Golf took over management of the course when the course’s lender, Bank One Corp., foreclosed on the property in September for defaulting on a $6.6 million loan, but the new owners ended that contract at the time of the sale and said they plan to run the course themselves as MGC Properties LLC.

PCN seeing success

Continued from previous page of Graves’ two companies. At the World Conference on Club Management in February, Private Club Network was recognized as New Product of the Year. Creative Golf Marketing was recognized as Membership Marketing Firm of the Year for the third straight time.

"We couldn’t be more pleased to be recognized with these awards, especially three years in a row," Graves said. "We feel it validates the services we’re able to deliver to our clients."

Graves said he hopes to eventually have 250 member clubs in Private Club Network.

"Obviously, the industry continues to weaken and the prominence of my two companies creates a strong demand," Graves said. "We couldn’t be more pleased to be recognized with these awards, especially three years in a row," Graves said. "We feel it validates the services we’re able to deliver to our clients."

Graves said he hopes to eventually have 250 member clubs in Private Club Network.

Heritage Golf

Continued from previous page extremely fortunate to be able to add them to our portfolio," Husband said. "Our mission all along has been to associate the Heritage name with the finest golf properties in the country. We continue to fulfill our mission with the addition of Washington National and Trophy Lake to our family of clubs."

Washington National is a John Fought-designed 18-hole daily-fee course with a University of Washington theme. Trophy Lake, designed by Fought and design partner Tom Lehman, is located near Olympic Range and Mount Ranier and offers both golf and fishing at its location. Both courses opened in 1999.
Kemper gives Harding Park a second look

Continued from page 13

were changed.

Skinner said KemperSports suggested the city fund the course publicly, which the city then did, opening the door for KemperSports' return.

"They got some grants to fund it publicly, so now it is a pure management contract from our standpoint," Skinner said. "It allows them to do what they need to do and control local rates. It's obviously a golf course that's very close to the hearts of many San Francisco golfers over the years. Just got too hard to balance if they had a private investor in there as well."

TAKING OVER FOR GOTHAM

The three former Gotham Golf courses KemperSports is managing are Edgewood in the Pines in Drums, Pa., Robin Dale Golf Club in Brandywine, Md., and Lake Arbor Golf Club in Mitchellville, Md. The company also manages another foreclosed property for ORIX in Wisconsin.

Skinner said the courses are great properties that are simply in need of some sprucing up.

"There are tough times at a lot of places and I think they got caught up in Gotham's other issues elsewhere, so they haven't had the attention, care or financing they need," he said. "We're just getting our feet on the ground there."

Skinner said the three properties are not unique.

"There's a lot of other courses caught up in it, so the uncertainty is not good for the golf courses, or the golf business in general," he said.

GRAND RE-OPENING

Harding Park is poised to open this summer, most likely in July, Skinner said. This is just over a year after the facility closed down to undergo what he called a significant renovation.

"It was a complete renovation from top to bottom," Skinner said. "They thinned out a lot of trees that had become overgrown, they kept the corridors pretty much the same, did a lot of shaping and rebuilt everything — all the fairways, all the drainage and irrigation."

Skinner said the renovation benefited from the good weather the area has enjoyed since the course closed last year (GCN, June 2002).

"The renovation is complete. It's in grow-in now. They've got a couple of drainage issues that they're correcting now, but the golf course should be ready to go by mid-summer," he said. "The new clubhouse is not up yet, but that construction will begin this summer, so we'll operate out of a temporary facility."

The initial plan was for Harding Park to be added to the PGA Tour's rotation of sites for the annual Tour Championship this year. Skinner said he wasn't sure when that would start now, but that the Tour will be bringing an event to Harding Park in the near future.

"They're negotiating with the Tour, but the Tour is bringing one of its international events, probably starting in 2006 to give us a chance to get the golf course in good shape and get the clubhouse up," Skinner said.

When the course reopens, it will also debut its nine-hole Fleming course, which also went under the knife, as well as a new First Tee facility. Skinner said he wasn't sure what the green fees would be, but city residents will pay significantly less than visitors.

"It's going to be exciting. It is so important to so many people out there in San Francisco, and to see the shape it was in before the renovation was just a shame," he said. "It's really going to be spectacular."
FLOWTRONEX ADDS RO, OXYGENATION TO IWM OFFERING

By ANDREW OVERBECK

DALLAS — Flowtronex PSI Inc. has added reverse osmosis and oxygenation systems to its growing stable of integrated Water Management solutions. In addition to its line of pump stations, the company sells irrigation, pH control, irrigation and filtration products.

The new reverse osmosis (RO) product has been developed in conjunction with Water Equipment Technologies, a Florida company also under the ITT umbrella. The RO system is made up of a semi-permeable membrane that blocks the transport of salts or other solutes.

RO systems were developed for large-scale projects that needed to turn salt water into irrigation-quality water, but they have typically been too expensive for smaller applications. However, as cost has come down, golf courses have made use of the technology. Systems are in place at multiple courses in Florida that have turned both high-chloride and brackish water into a suitable irrigation supply. The systems are capable of producing 400,000 to 1,600,000 gallons per day (gpd). "They are now getting the RO units down cost-wise where it is not only an effective means of removing sodium from water but it can be used in brackish water, poor well water or even effluent water depending on what part of the country you are in," said Flowtronex irrigation national sales manager Alan Olson. "In the past they were used when it was impossible to grow grass without it, now they are being used where you are valuing the improvement in grass quality that you get from higher quality water."

While cost for an RO system depends on the size, capital costs for brackish water: RO ranges from $0.60 to $0.90 per gpd of capacity, installation and commissioning costs. Operating costs range from $0.70 to $0.85 per 1,000 gallons of product water based on a power cost of $0.86/kwh and membrane life of five years. "Since most municipal supplies range from $1.50 to $3.30 per thousand gallons these plants are a very competitive alternative to purchasing water," said Water Equipment Technologies general manager Jorge Menningmann. "They also have an advantage over reclaimed wastewater by providing a consistent benefit to sales growth as demonstrated by the RO systems."

FLOWTRONEX'S NEW ULTRA-EFFICIENT OXYGENATION SYSTEM

BRIEFS

BASF APPOINTS TOCE

RESEARCH TRIANGLE PARK N.C. — BASF Corp. has appointed Mike Toce business manager for the company’s professional turf and ornamental group. Before that he was sales manager for the turf and ornamental group. Toce was the business manager for the turf and ornamental group. Prior to this appointment, Toce was the business manager for the turf and ornamental group.

GUGLIOTTI JOINS BIOSAFE

GLASTONBURY, Conn. — Melissa Gugliotti has joined BioSafe Systems as sales director for the aquatics market. Gugliotti’s addition to the BioSafe team is in preparation for projected growth throughout 2003. Her responsibilities will include managing distribution, customer relationships and product development of GreenClean Pond Treatment as well as other products introduced into the aquatics market by BioSafe Systems.

FORE PAR EXPANDS OFFERINGS

BUENA PARK, Calif. — The Fore-Par Group, based here, recently purchased and consolidated the operations of Fore-Par, Range Land USA, Santiago Golf Car Supply and American Turf Services to become one of the largest distributors and manufacturers of driving range equipment, golf course amenities and golf car parts and accessories. The company has also signed a contract with Evergreen Alliance to supply its 43 golf courses with a full range of accessory and amenity products.

AQUATROS NAMES CONARD

CHERRY HILL, N.J. — Aquatros has named Kathleen Conard territory manager for the Mid-Atlantic region, including eastern New York, eastern Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Delaware, Maryland and Virginia. Conard has worked Aquatros’ corporate marketing department for more than 15 years.

SIMPLOT T&H LOOKS FOR STRONG 2003

By ANDREW OVERBECK

BOISE, Idaho — Despite a slowing golf economy, Simplot Turf and Horticulture posted 10 to 15 percent sales growth in 2002 and is looking ahead to an equally successful 2003. "With the economy, golf course budgets being slashed, and construction plateauing, it is obviously a time of change for industry," said Jim Barker, vice president and general manager for Simplot Turf & Horticulture. "When we look at our business and the activity in golf, we feel good about where we are." Barker said the company’s Simplot Partners distribution arm, which it formed in 2000, is driving much of the firm’s growth in the golf market. Simplot Partners covers every part of the country except the Southeast. "They have had a real renaissance within the past year," he said. "We have concentrated on pinpointing niches and being equally successful 2003.

DLF COMPLETES CEBECO INTEGRATION, CHANGES NAME

By ANDREW OVERBECK

HALIFAX, N.S. — DLF-TI-FOILIUM has completed the integration process following its take-over of Netherlands-based Cebeco Seeds Group Jan. 31. The deal was initially signed in mid-December. As part of the process, the combined company has changed its name to DLF International Seeds and has relocated its offices to Cebeco’s Halsey location. As a result of the merger, the company has reduced its workforce by 25 percent. DLF’s Claus Sass is the new general manager, Cebeco’s Brad Dozler is the national sales manager and DLF’s Rick Myers is handling domestic sales responsibilities.

While the buy-out was largely driven by the two companies’ desire to increase their dominance in the European market, the purchase will affect the U.S. marketplace. DLF will expand its presence in the forage market, but it also has gained instant access to the golf market through Cebeco. "DLF had done very little in golf," said Myers. "Golf is now strong. DLF has rights to the American Golf contract and they have a strong presence in the Southeast through a distribution contract with Harrells. It fills a very large void for us as far as the golf market goes."

Myers also said the combined company will be bringing more new products to market in the very near future. "We will be introducing a lot more new products through our research and development in Europe and the United States," he said. "There will be new products coming down the line."

LESКО REPORTS HIGHER SALES, DRAMATIC EXPANSION PLAN

CLEVELAND — In its full-year 2002 report, Lesco Inc. said it posted higher sales and net income for 2002. The company also announced that it has opened three new regional distribution hubs and that it was moving forward with plans to dramatically expand its Service Center outlets.

Net sales were $511.7 million, up 1.5 percent from the $504.3 million reported in 2001. Lawn care sales increased 5.4 percent to $281.7 million, but golf sales remained flat for the year ($132.7 million versus $132.6 million).

Fourth quarter results, however, were promising with lawn care and golf sales up 5.9 percent and 2.7 percent, respectively. "We used the second half of 2002 to position Lesco for growth in 2003," said president and CEO Michael P. Dimino. "We have restructured the sales force, increasing our direct sales force by 60 percent and changing our commission programs to reward superior performance. These efforts have already contributed to sales growth as demonstrated by the sales increase in the fourth quarter."

To increase sales, Lesco has added new distribution hubs in Chicago, Atlanta and Plano, Texas. The hubs are state-of-the-art distribution facilities, each designed to serve more than 70 Lesco Service...
**BASF set to grow**

Continued from page 1

To tie these two divisions back together and have one specialty group.

Briggs has already made inroads by integrating the mostly post-patent chemistry from TopPro into the BASF product line. The turf and ornamental products include Curasan and Propiconazole fungicides, Vantage and Basagran herbicides and Amadro Pro fire ant bait.

While work on selecting which products will be pulled forward is ongoing, Briggs said the new portfolio will be comprehensive. "BASF is strong in herbicides and TopPro has one of the broadest turf fungicide portfolios," he said. "BASF is awaiting two new fungicides [Insignia and Emerald]. So if you take what BASF has coming in 2003, and the post-patent chemistry from TopPro, we will have the market needs covered."

According to Briggs, approval from the Environmental Protection Agency is expected on Insignia and Emerald by mid-summer. The products will likely not be available until the 2004 season. Another significant boost to BASF's product offering is slated to come with Bayer ES's divestiture of its fipronil products, which include insecticides Chipco Choice, Top Choice and Firestar. Briggs said the deal would allow the licensing back of the products, including the trade names, to Bayer ES. The U.S. Federal Trade Commission approved the deal Feb. 14, and at press time both parties were waiting to hear from the European Commission.

"Fipronil will really complete the line," said Briggs. "It is a very effective insecticide."

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**Syngenta partners with Pursell Farms**

FAYETTEVILLE, Ala. — Pursell Technologies Inc. has added another industry sponsor to its budding 18-hole research and demonstration golf course. FarmLinks at Pursell Farms is set to open in early June.

Pursell Technologies developed FarmLinks to provide the industry with an outdoor working laboratory to test new products and maintenance practices that will benefit the industry.

"Syngenta will be using the FarmLinks facility to test products and management solutions," said Joe DiPaola, Ph.D., golf market manager for Syngenta. "We'll be supplying pest control products for the course and working with the FarmLinks staff to demonstrate our solutions approach to turf problems."

FarmLinks at Pursell Farms is the venue for the PTI Tour program. Each year, Pursell Technologies brings in more than 1,000 professionals from the golf, turf and horticulture industries to visit Pursell Farms for two to three days of learning, recreation and relaxation. FarmLinks is designed to showcase 18 holes of experiments to tour attendees, where they can learn about products, equipment and turf management practices.

**Lesco expanding**

Continued from previous page

Centers and 30 Lesco Stores-on-Wheels with regional stocking assortments and improved transportation services.

The company is also opening new Service Centers, which are expected to generate approximately $10 million of net sales in 2003, bringing the total net sales increase to a range of 6 to 8 percent. Lesco opened a new Service Center in Haverhill, Mass., on April 2, the first of 23 new outlets that the company plans to open in 2003. DiMino said Lesco has identified major U.S. markets that could support more than 500 additional stores.

In order to maximize the long-term value inherent in the Lesco model, we have to open additional Service Centers. We should always have a group of stores entering their third year of operation," said DiMino. "In the third year stores become profitable and defray the costs of new stores. Unfortunately, Lesco has not opened new stores since 1998 and for the next two years we will have to pay for store openings through the sacrifice of short-term earnings."

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**GOLF COURSE NEWS**
Audit shows a significant increase in commitment to creating value for our advertisers. Companies also added key sales representatives and streamlined operations and logistics to allow us to get more direct contact with the superintendent.

"Superintendents are faced with tightening budgets and higher expectations, so we need to build on what we did last year by continuing to bring value to their business," Barker added. This spring, Simplot Partners will also introduce improved formulations of its surfactant, adjuvant and soluble fertilizer products that it acquired from now-defunct Eco Soil Systems. Activity is also picking up on the Jacklin Seed side of the business. In the latest National Turfgrass Evaluation Program (NTEP) trials, the company had seven out of the top 10 Kentucky bluegrass varieties. Work is also progressing on its new T-1 and T-2 bentgrass. The seed is available on a limited basis as samples and will be entered into NTEP trials this summer. The bentgrass will go into limited production in 2004 and will fully roll out in 2005 in conjunction with the release of the NTEP data.

There have been some challenges on the seed side, however. The company is trying to regain Plant Variety Protection for L-93 creeping bentgrass. "L-93 is in the appeal process," Barker said. "There is confusion in the marketplace caused by a false perception that L-93 is off-quality. No matter the outcome of our appeal, L-93's quality and performance is unmatched among bentgrass varieties. A decision on L-93 is expected this spring. "Marketing issues aside, Barker expects a strong year on the seed side of the business. "We see supply and demand starting to come back in line in the industry," he said. "Especially if you look at some of the harsh weather conditions we had this winter. We think there will be high demand for turf replacement."

Simplot T&H expects L-93 decision soon
Continued from page 16

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Meteorlogix introduces Turf Edition

Meteorlogix has released a new software Turf Edition which is designed to ensure employee safety by protecting business profits. The PC-based platform delivers timely, accurate, and complete weather information, without the wait of downloading from the Internet. The high-resolution technology continually assesses weather conditions and sounds an audio alarm when a strike is detected within a customized zone of protection. For more information, contact: 800-328-2278 or www.meteorlogix.com.

Nature Safe adds UFLEXX nitrogen

Nature Safe Natural & Organic Fertilizers has teamed up with Agron International to offer 21-3-7 with UFLEXX Stabilized Nitrogen. The two-particle blend formulation improves nitrogen efficiency and reduced nitrogen loss from volatilization and leaching. UFLEXX incorporates technology consisting of a nitrification and urease inhibitor to stabilize urea. It provides a safe, predictable nitrogen release for up to eight weeks. Nature Safe is a blend of various plant and animal meals that are a balance of proteins, fats, yeast, sugars, starches and carbohydrates. For more information, contact: 800-252-4727 or www.naturesafe.com.

BioSafe ready with OxyGROW

BioSafe Systems is ready with OxyGROW, an improved, patented mycorrhizae formulation. OxyGROW improves upon mycorrhizae by adding a packaged pure oxygen source and calcium that accelerates the establishment of beneficial mycorrhizae on root systems of turf grasses. OxyGROW provides a slow release oxygen source overcoming compacted or anaerobic soil conditions. The oxygen is released slowly over time, providing the root system of turf an environment for the establishment of mycorrhizae and other beneficial organisms. Calcium enhances the strength of the cell tissue for greater resistance to disease and adverse weather conditions. OxyGROW is also formulated with more than eight species of ecto and endo mycorrhizae fungi that allow the plants to become much more efficient in its ability to take up nutrients, water and resist soil pathogens. For more information, contact: 888-273-3088.

The TigreCar GST77 features three-sided hydraulic dumping

Redexim rolls out the TigreCar

Redexim Charterhouse has rolled out a new utility vehicle, the Carraro TigreCar GST77, designed specifically for use on golf courses for a wide variety of turf maintenance tasks.

The TigreCar features a rear flatbed complete with three-sided hydraulic dumping capability and protective grid between the flatbed and the operator's seat. The four-wheel drive unit is from steering and offers a carrying capacity of 4,000 pounds. The vehicle is manufactured by Antonio Carraro S.p.A, a well-known Italian tractor maker that specializes in compact, multifunction vehicles.

For more information, contact: 800-397-5604.

A screen view of the WeatherSentry Turf Edition

The Lightning Manager offers an extra level of safety by allowing users to monitor real-time lightning strikes around their course. The system continually monitors real-time radar and storm tracking and features a real-time lightning radar that allows users to see exactly where storms are, but where they are headed and when they will get there up to 30 minutes in advance.

The four-wheel drive unit is front steering and offers a carrying capacity of 4,000 pounds. The vehicle is manufactured by Antonio Carraro S.p.A, a well-known Italian tractor maker that specializes in compact, multifunction vehicles.

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OxyGROW, an improved oxygen source overcoming soil conditions

OxyGROW is a new oxygen source for plants. It is designed to provide a slow release of oxygen to plants, allowing them to grow faster and more efficiently. The oxygen is released slowly over time, providing the plant with a consistent source of oxygen that allows it to thrive.

For more information, contact: 888-273-3088.

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For more information, contact: 800-397-5604.

GOLF COURSE CLASSIFIEDS

To reserve space in this section, call Anne Washburn
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SEEKING MANAGEMENT COMPANIES

The Board of Munster Parks & Recreation is seeking management companies to finance, construct, and operate a 9-hole golf course, driving range, clubhouse, entry road and parking lot at Lakewood Park in Munster, Indiana. The majority of the golf course and driving range will be located on a town-owned, closed sanitary landfill site. Interested parties should contact Chuck Gardner, Director of Parks & Recreation at (219) 836-7275.

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GOLF COURSE FOR SALE

Carlson to help draft development standards in Sarasota County

Continued from page 1

its Development Services department to come up with golf course development standards because it was too time-consuming to handle approvals on a case-by-case basis.

"The Board of Commissioners asked for design and performance standards for golf course development because as it stands today, there is nothing that specifically addresses golf courses," said Dorothy Zysko, resources protection services manager for the county. "They felt it was more appropriate to look at courses in general and devise standards that would apply to all courses. This would also give developers an idea ahead of time of what the county expects of them."

The standards, which are still being formulated, will integrate the best management practices developed by the Florida Department of Environmental Protection and the Florida Water Management District and will cover requirements including site acreage, buffer zones, setbacks, open space, stormwater and drainage, water use, habitat management, and construction and post-construction monitoring. Requiring courses to become members of an environmental program like Audubon International is also being considered.

Zysko decided to put together an advisory committee made up of interested parties to discuss the proposed standards. In addition to Carlson, members from Audubon International, the Audubon Society, the Sierra Club, the GCSAA and two developers and engineering firms attended the first meeting in February. The committee aims to have final regulations in place by the end of May.

According to Zysko, Carlson was a natural choice for the committee because of the work he has done at Venice G&CC. "We felt there was a need for a more comprehensive approach to water use and conservation and habitat preservation. Tom has done quite a bit on his course, so we asked him to participate," she said.

Carlson, who came to the club two years ago, immediately pushed the members to become Audubon certified. "This is the perfect course for it," he said. "We have wetlands, pinelands, uplands and oak hammock. It's a perfect mix of terrain and vegetation."

Carlson started by building a new maintenance facility from the ground up, putting in a state-of-the-art mixload station, a wastewater system and fuel tanks. Then he went to work restoring habitat and wetland areas on the course.

"We have fresh-water wetlands, but they are disconnected and no longer flow naturally," he said. "We had upland plants that were moving into them, so we are working with the county to use a nearby lake to inundate them once a year to bring them back to their natural cycle.

"We also cleaned up the buffer zones and converted turf to natural areas to connect habitat and give wildlife cover," he added.

A new high-tech irrigation system helped reduce water use by 34 million gallons last year and using Polyon-coated slow-release pesticides has helped reduce chemical use.

Showcasing the course's environmental improvements has been an important step in the process, said Carlson.

"We had the county's Integrated Water Management officials over for a tour and they didn't realize that golf courses were working on mitigating environmental impacts. They had no idea. They didn't know Audubon International existed," he said.

Carlson is quick to admit that his situation at Venice G&CC allows him to spend the extra time on environmental projects. "I am fortunate here because I can spend time on this," he said. "I have a good staff and a great assistant that runs the course and frees up my time. Although I do get a lot of work done when people leave for the day."

He also said the development standards being discussed would likely make golf course construction more expensive, but it would do away with practices that have given the golf course industry a black eye.

"Yes, it will bring up the cost of construction," said Carlson. "But it will ensure that what is built is responsible. By having requirements right off the bat, it will select out those who don’t want to be responsible."
Vendors applaud GCSAA, NGCOA show merger

Continued from page 3

marketing for Flowtronex. “We think meeting with owners, especially if they are side-by-side with the superintendent, at one big show will be a great opportunity.”

Even chemical and fertilizer companies are eager for the opportunity to be in front of both members of the buying team.

“We think meeting with owners, especially if they are side-by-side with the superintendent, at one big show will be a great opportunity.” — Tom Levy

Link Up 2 Golf expands

Continued from page 3

on-course experiences. The program will culminate in a four-hole scramble.

This year’s new markets will be: Carolinas Section - Raleigh, N.C., Charlotte, N.C., Greensboro, N.C., Greenville, S.C., Columbia, S.C.

Colorado Section - Denver, Colorado Springs, Fort Collins/Greeley


Hartford, Ct., New Haven, Ct.

Michigan Section: Detroit, Traverse City


Boston, Mass., Providence, R.I.

North Florida Section: Tampa, Sarasota, Jacksonville, Orlando, Tallahassee

Northern Ohio Section: Toledo, Cleveland, Akron

Southern California Section: Ventura County, Bakersfield, San Diego

Southern Ohio Section: Cincinnati, Columbus, Dayton

Tennessee Section: Nashville

Since its creation, Link Up 2 Golf has attracted more than 1,200 students.
This has driven out several cash sources,” explained Thomas Bruff of KPMG Golf Practice.

But Golf Course News editorial advisory board member Larry Hirsch of Golf Property Analysis made the point that course owners need to look to their local banks for financing. He feels that the older and more established golf operations could be in a significantly better position, as they may not be carrying as heavy of a debt load as the newer golf developments.

“I am not ready to conclude that the ‘mom and pop’ operation will be the significant player in the future but I do think that there is a trend developing that way as management groups struggle to find ways to increase profitability,” Hirsh told an economics seminar.

Hirsh noted that there is a different buyer coming into the golf market now, one who has a passion for golf and can accept lower profits to become involved in the game. Many believe the passion for the game is one that needs to be brought back to the forefront of golf.

But the most important issue to be addressed was the slump in rounds played nationwide and how to reverse that trend. The detailed research carried out by Golf 20/20 put things into perspective. Golf is a $62 billion industry that has at its core 10 million best customers (those who play at least 25 rounds or spend $1,000 annually).

The survey found another 12 million potential best customers playing golf, and an ESPN.com poll found 45 million people who say they are golfers. So the challenge to the golf industry is how to get this large pool of golfers back to the golf course.

The answers seem to hinge on two points. First, course owners were urged to improve their marketing to the best customer in order to make them loyal customers. Second, is the challenge of bringing new golfers to the game.

An ambitious project, Link Up 2 Golf, created by the PGA of America, will be expanded this summer (see story on page 3), and course owners are being advised how they can help make golf a better experience for the new golfer.

During the problem solvers sessions many explained some of their ideas for encouraging junior golfers through value passes and encouraging afternoon family days to fill afternoon tee times. Some even presented ideas of creating three-hole and six-hole experiences for beginning golfers to get them comfortable in course situations. All these ideas aim to address concerns that golf takes too much time.

Conference attendees were also very positive about the recent announcement that the NGCOA and the GCSAA conferences will merge in 2005. This obvious linking of trade shows will join superintendents with the controllers of the checkbook, which should improve efficiency for both parties.

Tom O’Malley of Saddleback Golf Course in Firestone, Colo., summed up the feeling of many about the combining of the two shows.

“1 think it is a no-brainer and I really can’t see any downside to it,” he said. “I don’t think that it will take away from our autonomy and I know that it will make our purchasing decisions much easier.”

Attendance at this year’s NGCOA Solutions Summit in Palm Springs, Calif., was up almost 13 percent from last year’s show.

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from the number of rounds played in January 2003.

WEST NORTH CENTRAL
NEW ENGLAND
MIDDLE ATLANTIC
WEST SOUTH CENTRAL
EAST NORTH CENTRAL
SOUTH ATLANTIC
EAST SOUTH CENTRAL
MOUNTAIN
PACIFIC

* The percentages above represent the difference in number of rounds played in the month of January 2002 from the number of rounds played in January 2003.

Source: Golf Datatech

CURRENT U.S. GOLF PROJECT ACTIVITY (MONTHLY CHANGE)

RENEWAL NUMBERS
The National Golf Foundation's monthly Golf Project Report numbers do not include courses classified as reconstructions or renovations. At present, 46 renovated/reconstructed courses are under construction and 2 renovated/reconstructed courses have opened.

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