

# MAINTENANCE



## BRIEFS

### IGM PROMOTES GANO, WELLS

CHAMPIONSGATE, Fla. — International Golf Maintenance (IGM) has promoted both Steve Gano and Jim Wells, CGCS, from regional managers to vice presidents of operation. Wells began working as a sales representative with Meadowbrook Golf's supply subsidiary, Golf Ventures, in 1990. He joined IGM in 1995 as a regional manager. Gano joined IGM in 1999 as a golf course superintendent at an IGM-maintained property. Prior to assuming his role as vice president of operations, Gano spent the last two years as the Southeast U.S. regional manager for IGM.

### BLUE HERON PINES GC TO HOST USGA PUBLIC LINKS TOURNEY

ATLANTIC CITY, N.J. — Blue Heron Pines Golf Club and the United States Golf Association will host the 2003 U.S. Amateur Public Links Championship July 14 to 19, 2003. It has been 20 years since this event has taken place in the Tri-state area, and net proceeds will be donated to the South Jersey Junior Golf Foundation, a non-profit organization based at Blue Heron Pines Golf Club. Steven Sanchez is the course's superintendent.

### GRIGG BROTHERS MAKES SEVERAL PERSONNEL MOVES

ALBION, Idaho — In response to strong sales growth in 2002, organic amino acid and fertilizer manufacturer Grigg Brothers has reorganized its staff. Gary Grigg, CGCS, MG, who recently retired after 34 years as a superintendent, is the firm's new vice president and corporate agronomist. Grigg, who is a past president of the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America, will be responsible for product education and training. The company also added Vince Van Meter as national sales manager, Roman Grigg as Northwest regional manager, and Todd Scott as Midwest regional manager.

## Dobie uses underground 'eyes' to solve drainage issues

By ANDREW OVERBECK

SHARON CENTER, Ohio — Faced with poorly-drained greens, superintendent Frank Dobie here at The Sharon Club decided to go underground in search of the culprit.

Instead of digging up his problem greens and redoing the drainage, which is quite a time-consuming and costly project, Dobie used high-tech plumbing equipment to locate blocked and clogged drains.

"We had a drainage problem in one of our greens and we noticed that a local plumber had a flyer that showed a snake with a TV camera mounted on the end," Dobie said. "So we rented the equipment to try it out on drain tiles, but a plumber had to come in and operate it. After taking seven hours to check one green and paying the plumber \$100 an hour I quickly figured out that we could buy one of these and save a

lot of money."

The club purchased a Rigid See Snake that came with a 200-foot snake, pushrod, monitor and radio transmitter for \$8,000. It takes two workers to run the equipment with one watching the monitor and the other manipulating the snake. Once a problem spot is located, the radio transmitter records the depth and location of the end of the snake, allowing workers to pinpoint the blocked area.

"This way we aren't guessing and digging in the wrong spot," said Dobie. "It is right on the money, within three inches. It has helped us fix crushed drain tiles and clear



A worker feeds the See Snake into a drain to scan for any blockages or crushed tiles.

tree roots from drain lines."

Dobie estimated the cost of equipment has paid for itself, and then some.

"This is one of the most valuable tools we have ever had, and in my estimation every course should own one," he said. "The money saved in

time and labor is worth the cost of the equipment alone.

"In terms of headaches, it is probably worth 10 times that," Dobie continued. "If you lost a poorly-drained green during the playing season, you lose rounds,

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## Returning supers battle tough job market, changes

By ANDREW OVERBECK

As the golf course construction boom in Asia has waned over the last couple of years, American superintendents have returned home to a very competitive job market. Out of the employment loop after time overseas, some have spent nearly a year looking for a superintendent position.

"My wife and I miss the cultural experience, but as for a career move I could not have timed it better," said James Sprinkle, superintendent at Ibis Golf and Country Club in West Palm Beach, Fla., who spent eight years in Asia, mainly in the Philippines. "Projects [in Asia] are still not starting and most clubs are going with local superintendents now."

"Being out of the U.S. market for eight years made it difficult to obtain a good job. I searched for about a year," he added. "Luckily, I had strong ties with

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## White puts enzymes to the test at Olde Mill

By ANDREW OVERBECK

PORTAGE, Mich. — After years of using a chemical-first approach to golf course maintenance, superintendent Paul White decided to take matters into his own hands and test alternative products and practices.

"I got to the point spraying fungicides when I realized that they were great at killing disease but the grass was not getting any healthier," said White, who is superintendent at Olde Mill Golf Club here.

White discovered an alternative to a chemical-only approach by accident. While working at Sauganash National in Three Rivers, he came across two drums of products from Consulting

Agronomists, a natural product formulator based in Chicago.

"I called up their agronomist Doug Arenberg and he explained to me what it was and we decided to give it a try," said White.

The product, Vital Reactions, is a proprietary formulation of enzymes combined with organic liquid fertilizer and micronutrients.

White saw success during his



White credits Vital Reactions for increased root growth

time at Sauganash so he decided to adopt the program full time at Olde Mill. But first, he set up a test program.

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## Audubon Int'l to hold first industry summit

HARTWELL, Ga. — Kicking off a "Fifty in Five" initiative to enroll 50 percent of U.S. golf courses in its environmental programs within the next five years, Audubon International is planning its first-ever industry summit on Feb. 12 at Catechee Golf Club here.

Catechee superintendent Buck Workman and course designer Mike Young will open the session, speaking on the intricacies of designing and maintaining an Audubon Signature property, while Signature Program director Nancy

Richardson will present an overview of the Audubon Signature Program. Then Audubon president Ron Dodson and director of programs and administration Kevin Fletcher will emcee an agenda geared toward the "Fifty in Five" initiative.

"At the end of the day," Fletcher said, "we want people to walk away with something that they feel they are a part of — an advisory council. We also expect to produce a document which captures the results of the discussion."