Drought lingers out West
The latest seasonal drought assessment shows no relief in sight for a region that has been battered by dry conditions.

Pinpointing winterkill causes
Researchers at universities are discovering more about the perennial problem of白雪带 out West.

Velocity kills Poa dead
EAST LANSING, Mich. — Managing Poa annua has traditionally been an inexact science, but researchers here at Michigan State University (MSU) along with chemical maker Valent USA, said they have discovered a postemergent herbicide that controls Poa and certain broadleaf weeds in bentgrass and ryegrass fairway turf.

“Velocity controls Poa,” said Jason Fausey, field market development specialist for Valent. “We are used to managing it, so this is a different approach.”

Valent acquired rights to Velocity in the turf and ornamental market from Kumiai Chemical. The Japanese chemical maker has rights to the agricultural market where the herbicide is currently registered for use on rice to control barnyard grass. Velocity’s active ingredient, bispyribac-sodium, inhibits the enzyme acetolactate synthase, which plants require to produce three key amino acids.

Valent submitted its approval package for Velocity to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency in April. Company officials said

Management cos. buck bum economy
By DEREK RICE
With rounds played numbers down, revenues flat and an economy suffering through ups and downs, there is little doubt that now is a difficult time to be a golf course owner or operator.

For management companies, the challenge of staying afloat is multiplied by the number of properties they either own or operate, each of which comes with its own set of issues and competition in a particular market.

Perhaps surprisingly, many management companies are not only surviving this economy, but they are actually thriving. The reasons for this are as varied as the companies themselves, but it would seem that a down time is a good time to be in the management business.

John Beckert, president and chief operating officer for Dallas-based ClubCorp, said his company has been able to hold its own for a number of reasons, including the sheer size and scope of its portfolio.

“One of our biggest advantages as a management company is our size,” he said. “Because we have almost 200 other golf and business clubs and three marquee resorts, when we go in and associate with a new club on a large scale, we can offer a consistent look across all properties they either own or operate, each of which comes with its own set of issues and competition in a particular market.

The numbers seem to support what The First Tee...

The First Tee shows major gains in ’02
By DEREK RICE
ST. AUGUSTINE, Fla. — In its fifth annual review, distributed in late April, The First Tee reported revenue of more than $6.8 million in 2002.

The unaudited report states that 52 percent of the organization’s revenue came from oversight organizations, 42 percent from fundraising and 6 percent from sponsorship. After factoring in expenditures, the organization ended up with nearly $400,000, or 6.7 million.

The numbers seem to support what The First Tee...

Editorial Focus: Utility Vehicles
Competition expands utility vehicle choices
BY ANDREW OBERBEEK
With new players on the scene and a bevy of new product introductions slated for the next six to 12 months, competition is heating up among utility vehicle manufacturers. Never before have superintendents had this many utility vehicles to choose from.

Yamaha Golf Car, E-Z-Go and Jacobsen all have new utility vehicles coming out this summer, and both John Deere and Kubota will unveil plans for new vehicles this fall. Toro said it will add an electric version of its Workhorse utility vehicle line in early 2004.

This spring, Club Car introduced the Carryall 272XL. Lesco rolled out its first utility vehicle and Polaris came to market with an entry-level product to fill out its line.

YAMAHA’S NEW LINE
A year after opening its $3.5 million manufacturing facility, Yamaha Golf Car (YGC) is set to introduce a new lineup of utility vehicles. June 7. In a move to bring
management companies

Continued from page 1

management contract basis, they become part of this bigger family. Through some of our upgrade programs, they can get access to these other clubs around the country and in Mexico and Australia.”

One reason OB Sports, of Scottsdale, Ariz., has been able to succeed in this economy is its longevity in the business, said C.A. Roberts, OB Sports’ vice president of business development.

“So many people jumped into golf management in the late ’90s because it looked good for some management companies, including OB Sports.”

“Because we’ve been in this business for almost 20 years, we’ve had the opportunity to try something on their own before it becomes almost impossible for us to do it ourselves,” Roberts said.

“By some of the other clubs around the country,” Roberts said. “We’re not doing any more deals now.”

“We’re focusing on the things that are working for us,” Roberts said.

“We’ve been able to do things more efficiently.”

Moving forward, Beckert said, ClubCorp, which has almost gone out of its way to avoid management-only contracts, will be able to use those experiences to its portfolio.

“We’re getting the message out that not only do we want to do it, but we’re going to be an aggressive player in that market,” he said.

“We’ve made a lot of progress in the last year and we’re reasonably confident at this point, that at least our organization has figured out how to ride the ups and downs. We’re pretty excited about the future.”

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