

GOLF COURSE NEWS

PREMIERE ISSUE
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VOLUME 1 NUMBER 1
PREMIERE ISSUE

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Nation's eyes on board ruling

BY VERN PUTNEY

The Vermont Environmental Board is sitting on a decision that could affect golf course development nationwide.

Scientists and turfgrass professors feel the Environmental Board has slighted their expertise by rejecting the initial request for a golf course in Huntington, Vt., on the grounds pesticides used on the course would threaten groundwater used for drinking as well as a nearby stream.

As the board ponders the developer's

latest appeal in the case, more upset and worry are being aired in the golf course industry and science community.

"Does Vermont know something we don't?" asks Dr. Richard Cooper of the University of Massachusetts' Department of Plant and Soil Sciences. His comment is echoed by other scientists.

At the heart of the debate is the 4-year-old effort of Paul Truax and Vermont partners to build an 18-hole golf course as the forerunner of a planned \$22 million resort

that would embrace luxury condominiums, hotel, conference center, theater, sports center and chapel in Huntington.

The board, which Nov. 9 again rejected Truax' application to develop the course adjacent to the Sherman Hollow Inc., ski resort, met Jan. 11 at Williston to consider an appeal. Because of probable lengthy review, a decision isn't due until Feb. 7.

That ruling isn't expected to be the last word.

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Dr. Michael Hurdzan, right, and Trivial Pursuit inventor Chris Haney look over land that Hurdzan is designing into an 18-hole course, called Devil's Pulpit, in Caledon Village, Ontario, Canada. See story on Hurdzan and his look at building affordable golf courses on pages 20 and 21.

Insurance spreading nationwide

BY MARK LESLIE

A veteran employee self-assuredly working with heavy equipment after so many years on the job, gets lackadaisical and a mower blade slashes off his index finger.

An inexperienced lady golfer hops onto a golf cart and promptly puts the vehicle into reverse instead of forward, pinning the caddy master behind her against a wall and breaking his leg.

A spectator at a golf tournament is hit in the head by a ball and returns the favor by suing both the club and the volunteer who was running the tournament.

In mishaps like these two parties can get badly hurt - the individual physically and the golf course in the wallet.

Physical danger seems to be inherent any time you combine machinery and people. The combination personifies Murphy's Law: "Anything that can go wrong will go wrong."

But by the end of this year golf courses throughout the country will be able to pro-

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Hyundai eyes cart market

Giant hopes to make splash

BY MARK LESLIE

Giant Korean manufacturer Hyundai Corp. U.S.A. expects to be selling golf carts in the United States by the second quarter of this year, according to a company official.

S.S. Cho, senior manager for development at Hyundai's Ft. Lee, N.J., headquarters, said only the legal procedure for permission to import the carts to the United States is holding up production.

Cho, who is in charge of the golf cart project, said the "internal procedure is going

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Green Section's Bill Bengyfield

Builders cite USGA section

The Golf Course Builders of America will honor the USGA Green Section Saturday, Feb. 11, for its "pioneering work in turfgrass research and management."

The GCBA will present the Green Section with its annual award at its banquet at 8 p.m. at the Anaheim (Calif.) Marriott Hotel, during the 60th annual International Golf Course Conference and Show.

Marion Farmer of Los Angeles, former chairman of the USGA Executive Committee's Green Section, will accept the award on behalf of the USGA. But Farmer passed on accolades to Green Section National

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Green Section

Continued from page one

Director William Bengyfield, who has spearheaded the section, its staff of agronomists and its high-powered research funding mechanism since February 1982.

"The strength of an organization comes from the top and Bill has been at the top for a long time," Farmer said. "We hope he'll be doing it for a long time in the future as well. Bill is the perfect mix of knowledgeable agronomist and pragmatic goals-oriented accomplisher."

The USGA Green Section is "always pleased and proud when other organizations recognize its contributions," Farmer said. He said that while golf clubs feel the "immediate impact" of the Green Section when its agronomists visit the golf courses to offer expert help, "the results of the research come in very subtle ways; sometimes the grass seeds do a lot better and no one realizes that that is because of research done a couple of years ago through the Green Section."

Farmer said the Green Section's Turfgrass Advisory Service, which has been offered since the organization was founded in 1921, sent agronomists on more than 1,300 visits to give advice to golf superintendents in the last year.

The Green Section's massive turfgrass effort, started in 1983, will have spent almost \$3 million on 16 research projects at 12 locations by the end of this year, he said.

This research has been supported at 33 experiment stations and universities throughout the United States.

One project is being supported

Sharing the section's award

USGA Green Section National Director William Bengyfield's team who share the award from the Golf Course Builders of America include:

- Agronomist for championships: Tim Moraghan at Golf House in New Jersey.
- Northeast Region: Director James T. Snow; agronomist Jim Connolly.
- Southeastern Region:

Director Patrick O'Brien; agronomist John H. Foy.

- Mid-Atlantic Region: Director Stanley Zontek; agronomist David Oatis.
- Great Lakes Region: Director James M. Latham Jr.
- Western Region: Director Larry Gilhuly; agronomist Paul Vermeulen.
- Mid-Continent Region: Director James Moore.

in New Zealand and the Green Section has been involved in projects in the Far East and Europe.

Meanwhile, it has created a clearinghouse for turfgrass research in the computer system at Michigan State University

More than 14,000 bibliographic data references on turfgrass research and general turfgrass information is "as close as your computer," Farmer said. By calling 517-353-7209 on his computer a superintendent can tap into studies and research published the world over.

"Nowhere is this information available in one place in the entire world," Farmer said.

This is the first year the Builders Association has presented the award to an institution instead of an individual.

Golf Course Builders President Don Rossi said his organization is honoring the Green Section for "the work they have done in turf research and management and for letting the world know that golf keeps America beautiful."

"Not only have they helped individual clubs, but the research they

do into grasses is indispensable," Rossi said. "As agronomists they come in and give the superintendent a helping hand. They don't come in to find fault or order them around, but to help them.

"They're just a wonderful organization."

Rossi also hailed the Green Section for the "tremendous amount of research it sponsors at universities and the grants it gives for developing different grasses."

One major aspect of the Greens Section's research today is developing a grass that doesn't need much water — a problem last summer especially, when drought hit the midsection of the United States.

The USGA has mandated the Green Section to "assist its members in their greenkeeping problems."

It states the Green Section's purpose is "to develop and disseminate information and knowledge about turf management especially as it relates to golf courses.

"In order to accomplish this purpose the Green Section shall engage in service to members,

The Green Section's massive turfgrass effort, started in 1983, will have spent almost \$3 million on 16 research projects at 12 locations by the end of this year.

both direct and indirect; promotion and development of turf research; cooperation with the U.S. Department of Agriculture and other turf interests; encouragement and cooperation with Extension Service activities and field services; development of trained workers in turf management, and coordination of information relating to turf management."

Rossi also pointed to Bengyfield's leadership in directing the Green Section's national program and its 10 agronomists, supervising championship course preparation and editing the Greens Section Record.

Bengyfield joined the USGA staff in 1951 and served as agronomist and western director of the Green Section until 1978 when he became director of golf courses and park maintenance at Industry Hills Golf Course in Industry, Calif.

Bengyfield rejoined the USGA staff in October 1981, and in February 1982 was made national director.

Bengyfield feels much of the credit for his staff's accomplish-

ments belongs to Farmer, who was a member of the Green Section committee from 1983-87 and chaired it from 1985-87.

"Marion Farmer helped pioneer the turfgrass research the USGA has done," Bengyfield said.

He explained that Farmer was instrumental in raising more than \$3 million for Greens Section turfgrass research."

Bengyfield called the Builders Association award "a very, very wonderful distinction to receive from such an organization."

Farmer, a retired Los Angeles businessman, served on the USGA Executive Committee from 1983-87 and chaired the Green Section during that time.

Farmer is a member and past president of the Bel Air Country Club in Los Angeles and long active with the Southern California Golf Association, serving on its board of directors.

Buzz Taylor of Jupiter Hills, Fla., is the current chairman of the Green Section Committee but can not attend the banquet, which will be preceded by a 7 p.m. reception.

Hannigan joins ABC

Frank Hannigan, the USGA senior executive director for the last five years, left the organization on Feb. 4 to take a post as commentator for ABC Sports.

Assistant Executive Director David B. Fay has taken over as acting senior director.

Hannigan will write a column in the monthly Golf magazine in addition to working with ABC.

Hannigan had been on the USGA staff since 1961.

USGA President William C. Battle said the search for a replacement was being delayed until a report on the association's organizational structure is finished.

"Frank has been an ardent supporter and friend of the golf course superintendent and the GCSAA for many years," said John M. Schilling, GCSAA executive director. "His contributions to USGA and the game of golf have been outstanding.

"I'm very happy that Frank will continue to be associated with the game in the future."

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