

Course accessory niche growing fast

This month's issue features an equipment update on golf course accessories. This niche of the golf course marketplace is growing with more intensity than the industry itself, with many new ideas in signage, yardage markers and distance measuring methods.

With all that is available for making play more pleasurable, it still happens that players still do not heed the warnings of signage protecting the golf course.

You'll find an up-to-date listing of the major accessory manufacturers on pages 20 and 21 of this issue. While our editorial staff tried to include as many products as



von Brecht

possible, there are just too many to list. Recently, while playing a foursome late in the afternoon, one of our group actually ran over a "No Carts" sign — while we laughed. I quickly pointed out to the person that he would most likely be mentioned in my next column... There is no excuse for this blatant inattentiveness on the golf course. We all must continually pay attention to course rules

and regulations.

This year's U.S. Open was especially exciting. Medinah Country Club Course #3 was spectacular. The weather, cooperating for the most part, allowed perfect greens and different playing conditions all four days.

Mike Donald is a very well-respected player among his peers. He has served on the tournament policy board of the PGA Tour and is known as "Iron Mike" due to his schedule of tournaments.

I've had the pleasure of having a beer with Mike through my association with the JC Penney Classic, which Mike won with Vicki Al-

varez in 1984.

Hale Irwin is the classic Tour veteran, from my hometown of St. Louis. His hand-slapping romp around the 18th green after making that 45-footer on Sunday will be seen over and over again.

Congratulations to both players and the crew at Medinah for a spectacular event.

Golf Course News has a new sister publication. United Publications has acquired Gourmet Today, the latest addition to our growing family.

Sincerely,
Charles E. von Brecht
publisher

Trust is the measure of company's character

BY MARK LESLIE

When the quality control falters, when the government inspection crew misses a beat, when the motor's governor is set too high, that's when a firm's reputation is on the line. And that's when company officials know their response will dictate their future.

The latest example in the golf industry is O.M. Scott & Sons' trouble with a contaminated lot of FF-II fungicide. When Scott discovered there might be a problem with a specific "manufacturing run," or lot, of the product, its officials sent technical representatives out into the field to handle the problem of turf-kill.

Superintendents at courses affected by tainted FF-II were grateful — both for the response and the fact Scott paid the bills for repairing their greens. That cost was substantial — upwards of \$100,000 just at Boyne Mountain Golf Course in Boyne Falls, Mich.

But, then, the response was expected. Superintendents are the men industry suppliers work with



Leslie

day to day, the people suppliers rely on and who rely on them.

Scotsman George Macdonald said: "To be trusted is a greater compliment than to be loved."

Trust. It is a measure of a person's character. And the character of a company's leaders is reflected in the company itself.

"By the work one knows the workman," said Jean de la Fontaine. That's an amen to: "By their fruits ye shall know them."

American writer Elbert Hubbard wrote: "We work to become, not to acquire."

But I say: "Work with integrity and you will do both. Your company, your golf course, your business of whatever type will birth a soul, and you will acquire wealth, both in money and other things."

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COMMENT

Scott's response showed its integrity and trustworthiness. Yet in the golf business — unlike some others — integrity is expected.

There are any number of other examples.

Last year government inspectors checking seed imported by seven U.S. companies failed to detect a noxious weed in the shipment. By the time they discovered it, Pennington Enterprises Inc. had sent it to K Mart stores nationwide and it had to be recalled.

Pennington lost \$200,000 and all the companies together absorbed a \$1-million loss, thanks to Uncle Sam.

But their response was quick and without question.

The financial loss hurt them all. But the loss of reputation, according to Sonny Pennington, was most critical.

Loaded warehouses and state-of-the-art research laboratories aside, any company's reputation — its integrity — is its most important asset.

Early this year, Mitsubishi and Daihatsu were informed their utility vehicles violated Environmental Protection Agency standards.

The vehicles had passed inspection, were out in the marketplace. Yet the EPA decided the Mighty Mits units had the potential to exceed 25 mph, the EPA's cutoff point for a vehicle to be classified as a utility vehicle (not subject to Clean Air Act emission standards) or light truck (subject to standards).

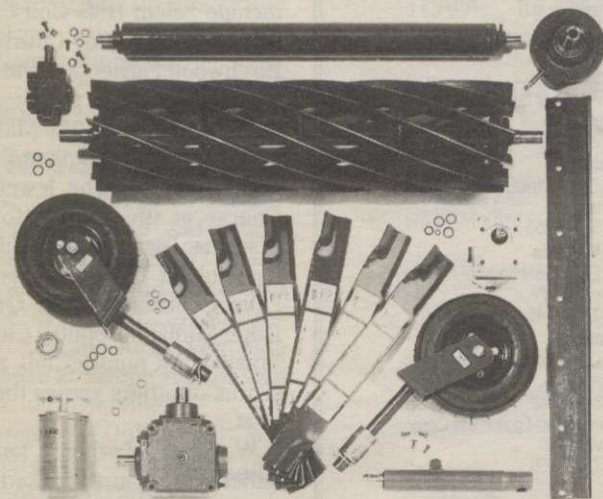
Although the units were made with a governor restricting them to less than 25 mph, the EPA said a mechanic could tamper with the governor and soup up the vehicle.

Shipments stopped for six weeks last summer, and ever since, the companies have been offering free-of-charge modifications to units already out on courses.

Mitsubishi and Daihatsu responded quickly and professionally. Just like Pennington. Just like Scott.

Just like others in the golf industry would do, thank God.

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