

SB
433
.G4
v3
no. 5

GOLF COURSE NEWS

THE NEWSPAPER FOR THE GOLF COURSE INDUSTRY

A UNITED PUBLICATION
VOLUME 3, NUMBER 5
MAY 1991

INSIDE

Golf car manufacturers make progress in both gas, electric

Better controllers combine with UST, emission laws to push electric sales. 32-33

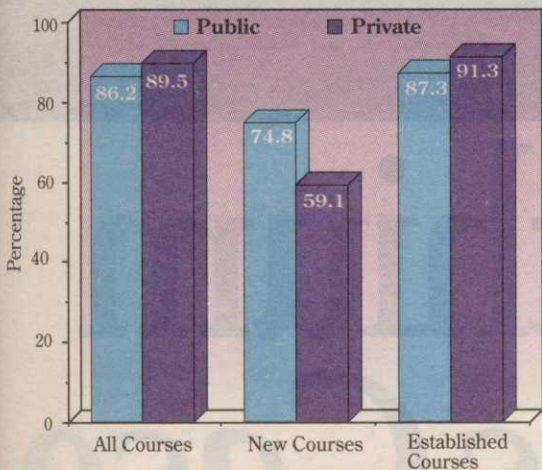
Wide-open territory

Architect Joe Finger "semi-retires" and takes expertise south of the border to Mexico 37

Fast, faster, fastest

Kenova builds even quicker 38

Capacity Use at Golf Facilities



COURSE MAINTENANCE

Graduates' job market good, not great 19
Wayne Otto, a 'maverick' proven a pioneer 20
Klauk and crew earn redemption at Sawgrass 21

COURSE DEVELOPMENT

PGA Tour enters public marketplace 29
Player excited about designing Pinehurst #9 29
Ross course owners nab Forse for remodeling 35

COURSE MANAGEMENT

Managers can raise revenues even in recession ... 42
Headhunters help managers land jobs 42
Mixed financial news for private clubs 42

SUPPLIER BUSINESS

Inventors adapt bike technology to golf cars 48
Aeration Industries to appeal court ruling 48
Eisele is Rain Bird's Salesman of the Year 50



Pedaling to par
Airplane mechanic takes mountain bike technology onto the golf course with a pedal-powered golf car.

Page 48

Supers' 10 deadly problems

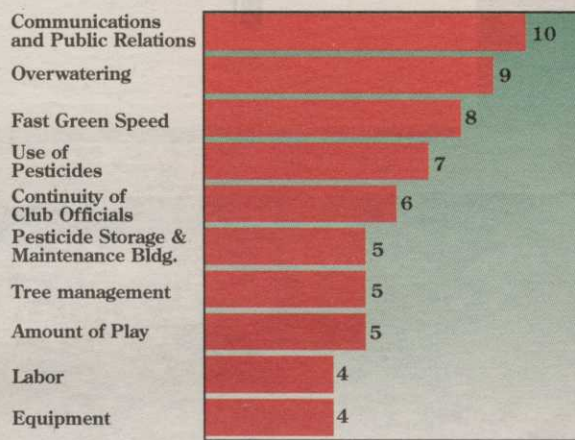
By Peter Blais

Inability to communicate is the major sin committed by those involved in golf course maintenance, according to United States Golf Association agronomists.

Agronomist James Connolly of Willimantic, Conn., gave a talk entitled The Top 10 Sins of Golf Course Maintenance during the recent Maine Golf Turfgrass Conference and Show in Portland.

The Top 10 list resulted from a survey of USGA agronomists conducted last year at the request of a group of golf course owners. Twelve of the 14 USGA Green Sec-

10 Worst Maintenance Problems



These 10 worst problems are listed according to the times they were mentioned by 12 of the agronomists with the United States Golf Association Green Section. Communications was listed the most times — 10 — and labor and equipment the least — 4.

tion agronomists responded.

Architectural comments were eliminated from the survey. But Connolly conceded architectural shortcomings — both outright architectural errors and outdated features like too-small greens or tees — were among the major problems superintendents face daily. Architectural errors would have ranked somewhere in the middle if they had been included.

The responses were regional. Western agronomists sometimes saw problems where their Eastern counterparts said none existed.

Continued on page 24

Water tax may cripple Florida courses

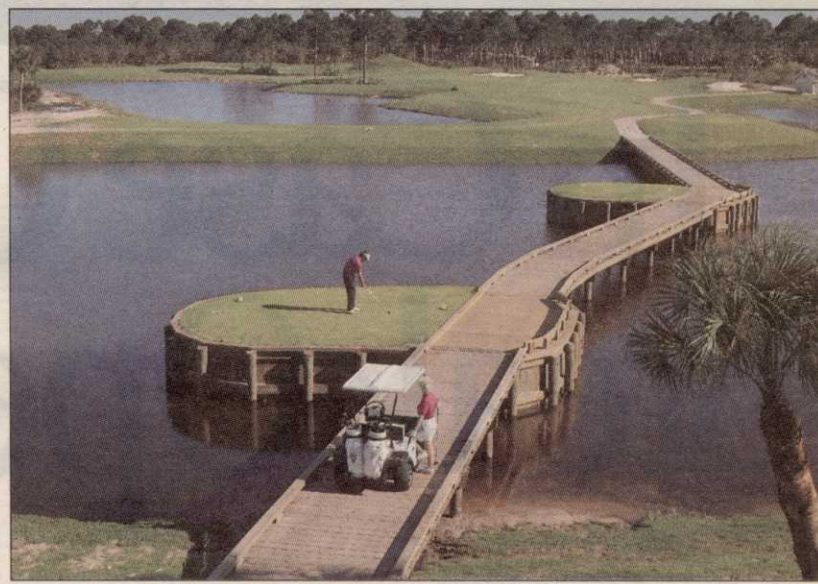
By Peter Blais

A water tax proposed by the Florida Legislature would have a "staggering" effect on the state's golf industry, according to Bob Young, head of the Florida Turfgrass Association.

The proposal calls for a 10-cent tax on every 1,000 gallons over a water user's allotment, with the money funding water conservation studies and practices. Courses using effluent would not be affected.

Emerald Dunes Golf Club owner Raymon Finch said the bill is aimed

Continued on page 23



A golfer tees off at a unique hole at Venice (Fla.) Golf and Country Club, designed by Ted McAnlis of North Palm Beach, Fla. Venice G&CC has received high marks since opening Jan. 12. For more information on new course development, see pages 29-31.

Tight money dampens optimism

By Mark Leslie

A "tremendous surge" of interest in golf course development is being met by a cautious, stand-pat attitude by banks, according to industry sources.

Whether their optimism springs from

the quick resolution of the Persian Gulf War, lower interest rates, improving demographics or other reasons, developers and buyers are actively looking to move forward on projects.

"There has been a tremendous surge

of new business since Jan. 15, with people going forward planning their projects," said Jim Applegate, president of Gary Player Design Co. of Palm Beach Gardens, Fla. Jan. 15 was the deadline for

Continued on page 40

USGA to fund final research projects

By Peter Blais

Studies on golf course environmental research project. The USGA will act by July on proposals concerning the effects of golf course maintenance on wildlife, managing wildlife on the course

and the psychological impact of courses on people, according to Mike Kenna, research director for the USGA Green Section.

Studies on the psychological effects of courses have

Continued on page 21

Klauk and crew earn redemption at TPC at Sawgrass

By Vern Putney

The 1990 PGA Tour stop at Sawgrass Stadium Course at Jacksonville, Fla., is remembered ruefully for the "Flaying of Fred," a public pillorying by the media of the golf course superintendent.

The 1991 version will be recalled as "Kudos for Klauk" long after Australian Steve Elkington's victory is forgotten.

Fred Klauk and his crew of 52 accomplished perhaps the biggest course turnaround in tour history.

Last year, the pros heaped scorn on the course and Klauk for conditions admittedly on the ragged side. Mother Nature had sabotaged the course, but the pros were not inclined to forgive.

They were similarly outspoken on the eve of this year's event. They went public as loudly, not to bury Klauk, but to praise him.

Sessions with PGA Commissioner Deane Beman, critiques, intense preparation, a two-week pushback in tourney dates and a break from the weather paid off handsomely.

Though Klauk felt players were overly critical in 1990, given winter wind and storm troubles, he took the heat. He didn't duck an NBC interview with Bob Costas in which difficulties appeared magnified.

Greens 1 and 2 were unquestioned rough spots and, yes, there were other areas of concern. Instead of hiding his head in the sand, Klauk stood his ground and said his mission for 1991 was to make the course the best ever.

He set the goal — and delivered.

First step was to huddle with Beman and define needed changes. It was agreed that an earlier end to daily play was necessary prior to the tournament.

The course was closed in the fall for overseeding. This procedure became 80 percent poa trivialis of the sabre variety and 20 percent bentgrass, instead of the other way around. The week's shutdown permitted uninterrupted germination.

A tree-trimming program meant more course sunlight.

Three months before the tournament, preparations were intensified. Two or three persons were added to the work force.

A key element was shutting down the course the Monday prior to tournament warmup action. Players arriving the Saturday before Thursday's opening-day round were amazed at the playing surfaces that loomed like huge carpets fit for a king's royal entry.

In what was believed an unprecedented effort, ball marks on all greens had been seeded. A fairway divot couldn't be found. The course was inviolate.



The recent PGA Tour stop at the Tournament Players Club of Sawgrass in Jacksonville, Fla., drew rave reviews from competitors for course conditions. Much credit goes to the golf maintenance management staff. Left to right are Mark Sanford, chief mechanic; Bob Clarkson, assistant superintendent, Stadium Course; Cathy Macormic, office manager; Gene Baldwin, assistant superintendent, Valley Course; Lee Rowe, landscape assistant, and Fred Klauk, superintendent.

Rocco Mediate, Sawgrass resident and the Tour's leading money winner, best expressed fellow pros' feelings during a practice round. Attached to his bag was a button reading "Fred Knows Greens."

Maintenance staff members also wore these buttons, supplied courtesy of Don Kepler, Klauk's junior high school coach in North Palm Beach, and former high school teammate Larry Mueller.

Greens 1 and 2 were no longer verbal targets. They matched the others in immaculate grooming.

Greg Norman, perhaps the No. One course critic in 1990, summed up the 1991 layout in one word — "perfect."

Elkington said of Sawgrass: "I don't think there's a harder course in the world to play than this one when there is this kind of wind (42 miles per hour the second day), but course conditions couldn't be better."

Sawgrass' reputation as a destroyer of title hopes in the stretch was reinforced. The finishing holes, especially the dreaded but hauntingly beautiful 138-yard 17th, finished many contenders.

Most memorable was Phil Blackmar. He'd teed off on that most unique hole on the tour, water-surrounded, most-photographed and most-hazardous, tied for the lead. Kerplunk! Bye-bye, Blackmar.

Sawgrass was open for resort play the morning following Fuzzy Zoeller's birdie miss

for a tie, and Gary Player hosted a corporate outing shotgun tournament Tuesday. He spent part of the morning trying to match Brian Claar's ace on the 17th.

A seed soil mix quickly cured the post-tourney divot blues.

Klauk, staff and tour officials have reviewed the tourney. A few minor adjustments are planned next year.

Despite the 1990 media battering, Klauk enjoys excellent press relations. He pointed out that the print media were most favorable from 1987 through 1989.

Klauk works at media exposure. He's friendly with the press and the players.

"I am aware of the temptation by the press to create controversy, and that it might be the supers' lot that tourney players and members might say, 'What have you done for me lately?' That goes with the territory.

"The big thing is that the public now has

'The public now has a better perception of how important the superintendent is to the success of the PGA Tour and golf in general.'
— Fred Klauk

a better perception of how important the superintendent is to the success of the PGA Tour and golf in general. With such sharp and critical focus, it's perhaps understandable that the super gets all the blame when things go wrong. On the other hand, reward can be great when conditions are near-ideal."

Tour players recognize Klauk as a big hitter in his own right. A two handicapper, he's been champion the past four years at Oak Bridge, a testing course within the Sawgrass complex.

He never scored better, though, than in his strictly spectator role in the tournament.

Elkington made off with the \$288,000 first-prize Sawgrass swag. Klauk made millions for superintendents in terms of public awareness and goodwill.

That Sawgrass was bracketed by the world's top pros with Augusta National and Medinah, Ill., on the "best-groomed" list was icing on Klauk's cake.

That coupling is far better than such shafts as "Marriott Muni" and J.C. Snead's "They messed up a perfectly good swamp."

Sawgrass resident Snead the past few months has eaten his words — gladly. "Freddy's Fashion Plate" had prevailed.

Course designer Pete Dye's contributions shouldn't be overlooked. Paul Azinger, tourney leader most of the way, said: "It turned out to be a great golf course. Maybe Dye did a better job than we gave him credit for."

For trivia buffs, the playing absentee among the top 20 in the Sony World Ranking was Payne Stewart. Sidelined by an ailing neck, he was restricted to commentator duty.

USGA deciding fate of last \$300,000

Continued from page 1

stirred the most debate among the review committee, Kenna said.

"Eighty-five percent of the population knows little about golf," he said. "Basically, we know that when people drive by a course, they look at it. But that's about it.

"We know people enjoy open space. That's why urban planners usually try to include parks in their designs. Golf courses are like parks, but they have the advantage of also generating revenue.

"We're wondering how funding that type of project would appear to USGA associates. That's what we're debating. The psychological effect proposals have come from schools of architecture. Maybe we need to get the golf course architects association on board a

project like that."

A major concern is getting hard, re-creatable data from such a project, or any of the \$2.5 million in studies the USGA has already funded under the environmental research project, Kenna said. The studies already funded have involved pesticide and agronomic issues.

"If someone finds fault with any of your data, it can crumble your whole argument," Kenna said. "We've started a quality assurance/control program to make sure the university research we get is of a quality we can use.

"We want the numbers to be well-documented and know where they came from so we can re-create the procedure and get the same numbers."



Golf Course Accessories

- Ballwashers • Detergent • Mounting Pipes & Bases • Tee Signs • Spike Brushes • Hole Cutters • Flag Poles • Flags • Cups • Rakes • Benches • Tee Markers • Practice Greens Markers • Whipping Poles • Course Signage • And More.

Requested by players. Preferred by course professionals. Specified by designers and used with pride wherever golf is played.

Call your Par Aide dealer today for our **FREE CATALOG**, or call us at 612/779-9851 for the name of the dealer nearest you.

© 1990; Par Aide Products Co., St. Paul, MN.