

Europe an exciting arena; Asia is next

As mentioned in my last column, Golf Course News attended Golf Course Europe '91 in Wiesbaden, Germany, in early October. Although attendance was less than expected, the quality of registrants was impressive.

Most interesting was the fact that very few superintendents registered for the conference, though the subject matter was to a large extent geared to the maintenance segment of the industry.

I discussed this with knowledgeable industry leaders. They indicated that European superintendents or greenkeepers, generally speaking, have not yet attained the status of U.S. superintendents, nor do they have access to maintenance education such as we have in

the U.S. Furthermore, they simply do not have the travel budgets to attend conferences and exhibitions, as do U.S. superintendents.

I had an opportunity to play a new 18-hole facility near Frankfurt, designed by the Hausers of Austria. (See page 9.) The fog and mist was so thick as we began the round that it was tough following the ball!

The course was interesting. Like the majority of new courses in this area, it is cut out of farmland — in this case, the historic sheep barn



Charles von Brecht

was being totally renovated and remodeled to become the clubhouse, pro shop, etc. The new greens were in good condition but 70 percent sand, which made them quick and hard to hold, even in wet weather.

The greenkeeper is a Scot recruited from his homeland. It's my understanding that more United Kingdom greenkeepers are being recruited on the continent for duties at the newer courses. There are even a few Americans heading up maintenance at new courses.

You may be pleased to learn that the American team (Perry Dye, Matt Dye, Cynthia Dye McGarry and yours truly), retained new-found U.S. supremacy in world golf by defeating on a handicap point basis the European team, 67-61. With no

help from me, Perry and Matt carried the U.S. team to victory.

We continue to consider a European edition of Golf Course News, as well as an Asian edition. The Asian edition would be published in conjunction with the Golf Asia show in Singapore in late March. I will keep you informed of our progress.

The special feature in this issue lists Golf Course Builders and Architects. This ever-growing segment of our business is most important to the quality and consistency of new courses and the renovation of older facilities.

I believe the United States has the best golf course builders, designers and architects. We have reason to be proud of these men and women.

CALENDAR

Some advice: Take part or be taken apart

U.S. Sen. Barry Goldwater of Arizona once said, "A government that is big enough to give you all you want is big enough to take it all away."

Yet, at the heart of our democracy is that it is of and by the people, and we have the right, if not the mandate, to direct our personal input into government decisions affecting us — from town to federal levels.

"Take part or be taken apart," Sen. Alan Simpson, R-Wyo., recently said about an issue before the Senate.

That could as well apply to the golf industry. The industry in Arizona and Florida stand apart from

other states as an example of standing up and taking part in the decision process. People elsewhere should take note.

"We have seen the enemy and he is us," said Walt Kelly of Pogo cartoon fame. But in this case it is not funny. The golf industry is its own enemy. Why? Apathy and excuses.

Not enough time to get involved, people say. It's a universal excuse

— one that has led to legalized abortion, rejection of prayer in schools and other decisions that have eroded our society.

Developers, builders and architects tell tales of mob violence at hearings, with misinformed opponents certain that a proposed course would destroy water resources.

Why don't they, or university scientists and others, show up armed with research documentation to help quell the storm?

Why not take the time to help a colleague — who could turn around and help you some day?

Apathy and excuses.

Today, each person in golf has a special opportunity to participate. And they don't even have to travel to some city council hearing room.

The Environmental Protection Agency has extended, to Dec. 14, its deadline for comments on the proposed wetlands delineation guidelines. (See page 4 story.)

This manual is critical to future development nationwide. Current rules defining wetlands are incredible. This can soften them.

No one wants to develop on real wetlands. But let's use common sense. And let's take part. Or the industry just might be taken apart.



Mark Leslie

GUEST COMMENTARY

Quality, quantity of water a consuming issue

By Charles Putnam

My father was a golf course superintendent for almost 50 years. As a child, I remember how he used to love Mondays. On Monday the course was closed and free of people who would take divots out of his fairways and leave ball marks on his greens. He cared deeply how his course looked and played and worried about it constantly.

One of the worries he didn't have, there in Seattle, was the quality or quantity of water available. He and his contemporaries, in the 1930s and 1940s they were called "greenkeepers," had lots of good water that was cheap. Although I don't know for sure, I believe the quality, quantity and cost of water were not major concerns anywhere that golf courses were being built in those days.

All of that changed sometime in the late 1960s or early 1970s. My first recollection of anyone suggesting the possibility of serious water problems, in terms of quantity, was at an Irrigation Association technical conference in Dallas. The year was 1973. The speaker was Professor Edward Hiler from Texas A&M University. He warned about

the rapid depletion of our ground water supplies and what the future would hold if we didn't take serious action now.

Coincidentally, at that same conference, Francisco Jimeno spoke on "Reclaimed Effluent in Golf Course Construction." We talked a lot, in those days, about sludge disposal and effluent use. It was a relatively new topic and had the interest of the irrigation community, both agriculture and turf. Jimeno's comments were interesting because he approached the subject from the standpoint of water and power conservation, rather than just disposal.

This was the year, you might recall, that the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) turned off the taps. Considering our situation today, a couple of Jimeno's remarks are worth repeating. Remember, please, that these statements were made 20 years ago.



Charles Putnam

"The outlook in the availability of water for the irrigation of turf is leading us to consider that the scarcity of this important resource will become critical before the decade of the 1970s comes to an end," Jimeno said. "The development of turf or grass-covered areas has proved of great value in providing a better living environment, helping control air pollution, furnishing better climatic conditions and adding beauty to the landscape."

Both Hiler and Jimeno suggested that better, more sophisticated management practices, more efficient sprinklers and state-of-the-art controls would all be necessary to deal with this growing problem. How prophetic were these two men? To answer that, look at what happened only a few years later, and where we have come in the past two decades.

In the 1970s, we experienced drought in areas where it would be least expected. Northern California, western Washington, parts of the Northeast and Great Lakes region all suffered from a severe lack of water at some time in that decade. Later, the depletion of the Ogallala Aquifer and other ground water supplies gave real cause for concern

among all irrigators, including those concentrating specifically on golf course work.

As the cost of building a golf course increased and energy costs rose dramatically, more efficient irrigation systems were more than just desirable, they were a necessity.

Some irrigation markets were slow to accept new technology. This has been especially true in the residential/commercial market. For the most part, this was probably due to economics. This has not been true of golf course irrigation, however. More than any other segment of the irrigation business, golf course developers and superintendents have been ready to accept and apply technological advances early in their introduction.

This, too, is probably due to economics to a large degree. For example, Roger Gordon, a widely known West Coast designer of golf course irrigation systems, points out an Arizona law governing golf course construction and irrigation. The law limits a golf course to 90 acres per 18 holes. To make matters worse, annual irrigation is limited to 4.8 acre-feet per acre. That is

Continued on page 11

Publisher
Charles E. von Brecht

Editorial Director
Brook Taliaferro

Managing Editor
Mark A. Leslie

Associate Editor
Peter Blais

Contributing Editors
Kit Bradshaw
Vern Putney
Bob Spiwak

Editorial Advisory Board
William Benneyfield
Dr. Michael Hurdzan
Hurdzan Design Group
James McLoughlin
The McLoughlin Group
Brent Wadsworth
Wadsworth Construction

Production Manager
Joline V. Gilman

Circulation Manager
Nicole Carter

Editorial Office
Golf Course News
PO Box 997
38 Lafayette Street
Yarmouth, ME 04096
(207) 846-0600

Advertising Office
National Sales:
Charles E. von Brecht

Marketplace Sales:
Simone M. Lewis

Golf Course News
7901 Fourth St. North
Suite 311
St. Petersburg, FL 33702
(813) 576-7077

West Coast Sales
Wayne Roche
James G. Elliott Co.
714 W. Olympic Blvd.
Suite 1120
Los Angeles, CA 90015
(213) 746-8800

United Publications, Inc.
*Publishers of specialized
business and consumer
magazines*

Chairman
Theodore E. Gordon
President
J.G. Taliaferro, Jr.



Copyright © 1991 by United Publications, Inc. All rights reserved and reproduction, in whole or in part, without written permission from the publisher is expressly prohibited.
POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Circulation Manager, Golf Course News, P.O. Box 1347, Elmhurst, IL 61026-9899.