

# GOLF COURSE NEWS

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INSIDE

## Summit meeting

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Photo by Pat O'Connor, Colorado DOW

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Colorado Division of Wildlife workers round up geese on a golf course to transport out of state. See story on page 13.

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## GCSAA to conduct exclusive research

Withdraws funding slated for USGA

By MARK LESLIE

The Golf Course Superintendents Association of America has withdrawn financial support from United States Golf Association research program to launch research projects of its own.

The move was met with awe by some in the industry, but drew support from the USGA itself.

Jim Snow, national director of the USGA Green Section, said: "The GCSAA couldn't do its research without withdrawing funding from our program. They

didn't pull out leaving us in the lurch... It wasn't a total surprise to me. They've expressed interest in doing some of these things for some time."



Saying that "in the end it won't affect what we do," Snow added: "In reality, more work will get done. I'm anxious to see the results of their work. We need all

the information we can get."

USGA President Stuart Bloch said that although he did not like losing the funding, "I think it will work out

Continued on page 20

## Environmental liability at issue on finance front

By PETER BLAIS

Fleet Financial Group Inc. recently became the first major bank in the country to require nearly all major commercial real estate lenders to obtain environmental liability insurance before getting a loan, a move likely to be followed by other financial institutions that could add thousands of dollars to the cost of a golf course development.

The Providence, R.I.-based firm instituted the new policy for any loan of \$1 million or more to protect the bank from having to clean up pollution on foreclosed properties.

The bank estimates a standard, \$2 million policy will cost \$10,000 to \$15,000 with a \$10,000 deductible

for three years of coverage. After the initial period, the policy must be renewed annually as long as the loan is in effect.

Lenders have required such insurance on occasional golf projects in the

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## Ransomes America working to sort out consumer confusion



*'Our goal is to have a corporate brand identity by the 1993 GCSAA Show in Anaheim.'*  
— Irv Aal, president  
Ransomes America

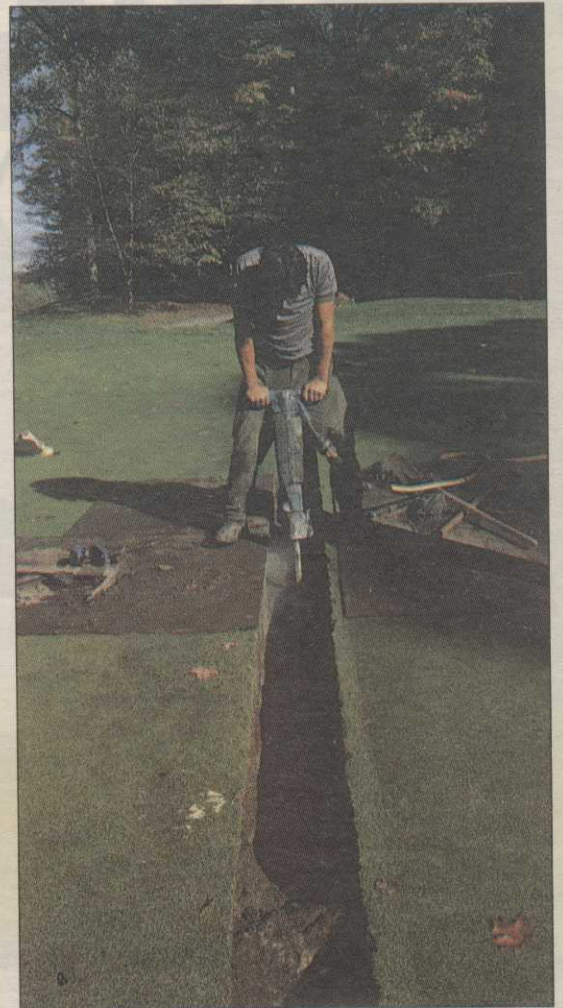
By HAL PHILLIPS

MINNEAPOLIS—Different names, different colors, different sets of distributors, different directions.

Cushman Inc., Steiner Turf Equipment and Brouwer Turf Equipment have all come under the Ransomes America Corp. umbrella since 1988. Not surprisingly, the last four years have brought a measure of consumer confusion in terms of name recognition and distribution logistics.

Yet when members of the golf course industry meet in Anaheim this winter, Ransomes hopes to

Continued on page 45



### THE HEAVY-HANDED APPROACH?

A maintenance crewman at Burning Tree Country Club in Greenwich, Conn., takes a jackhammer to the 15th green. Why? Turn to page 54 for answers in this month's edition of *On the Green*.

## Course owners explore the intricacies of group buying

By HAL PHILLIPS

The National Golf Course Owners Association (NGCOA) is implementing a cost-saving measure that management companies have employed for some time: Group purchasing.

Buying in bulk can save thousands of dollars in a single fiscal year, provided the management firm or association has enough member clubs to make the volume purchase worth executing.

However, the single biggest obstacle to group purchasing may be good ol'

Continued on page 41

# Lenders may impose environmental liability insurance

Continued from page 1

past, "but it has not been routine," said Bill Love, a principal in the Maryland-based golf course architectural firm Ault, Clark & Associates.

"I can understand the reasoning. But I don't know what ramifications it might have on development. I can't see that amount of money stopping a project, although I know developers won't like it."

Denver-based environmental insurance company Eric Group Inc. helped design Fleet's program, according to Karen Scherger, Eric Group's communications director.

The policy, she said, will cover pre-ex-

isting conditions that went undetected before the loan was made; pollution that migrates onto or off from the property; and pollution caused by tenants.

At least 35 of the nation's 50 largest banks have indicated to the Eric Group they are considering requiring environmental liability insurance, Scherger said. So, too, have alternative funding sources like credit firms and mortgage companies.

"So far, Fleet is the only one to require it on a facility-wide basis," she said.

"We would consider a golf course as a qualifying project and require the insurance," said Fleet Vice President Joanne McClatchy.

Fleet has not financed a golf course project in two years and considers courses "a discouraged credit," she added.

While the insurance policy protects banks in the event of foreclosure, the policy is primarily intended to shelter developers from getting burned for millions of dollars to clean up something they did not know was there, Eric Group Vice President Glen Sibley said.

Agriculture is an old industry known for running into undetected problems with leaking underground storage tanks or pesticide contamination. Golf courses are often built on former agricultural land. That makes golf developers an excellent audi-

ence for such a policy, whether a lender requires it or not, Sibley said.

Developers have used similar insurance policies as a substitute for an environmental indemnity clause in a sales contract, Sibley noted.

An environmental indemnity clause usually requires the seller to pay for cleaning up any pollution discovered after the developer buys the land. But such a clause may not stand up in court, or the seller may simply not have enough money to clean up the pollution. Unless he was insured, the developer would likely have to pay clean-up costs out of his own pocket.

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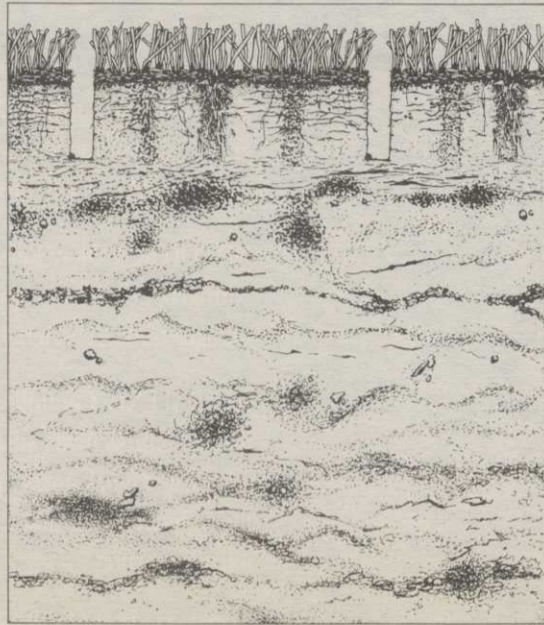
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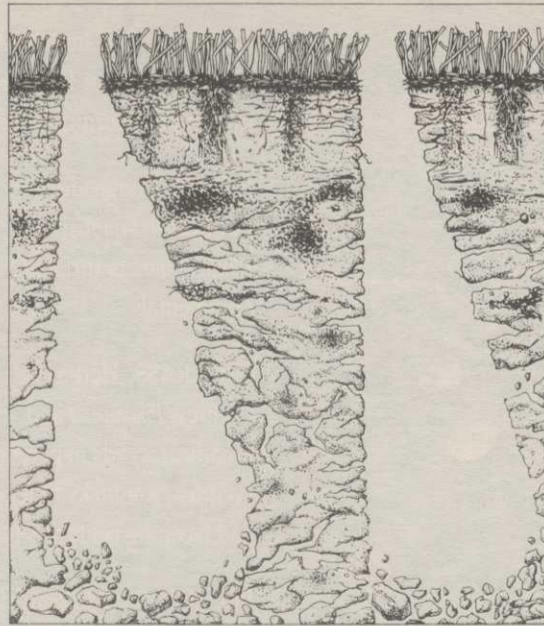
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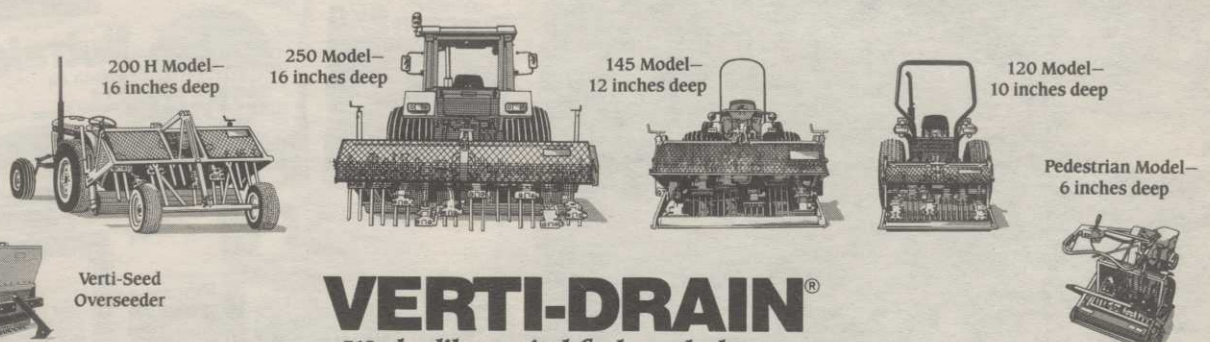
Some people believe the myth that all aeration is beneficial. But they're wrong. You've got to match the aeration technique with the soil profile. For instance, often vertical aerating equipment cuts the roots and undermines results. Other equipment makes holes too small to allow fertilizer and nutrients through or to remain open. Some devices fail to crack the core sidewalls and don't allow water to drain properly. Many turf professionals have found that aerating or punching too close to the surface can create a new subsurface hard pan.

It is sometimes better to pull cores as opposed to solid tining. To be sure, the knowledgeable turf professional recognizes that selecting the appropriate aeration technique is a complex decision involving many factors. Fine textured soils, high sand-based soils, high silt and clay content soils all require special considerations regarding deep cultivation.

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