

# GOLF COURSE NEWS

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### BEST OF THE BEST

In an exclusive *Golf Course News* poll, the Ocean Course at Kiawah, a Pete Dye creation, has been named the top public seaside course to open in the last five years. The *Golf Course News* 1992 awards section begins on page 56.

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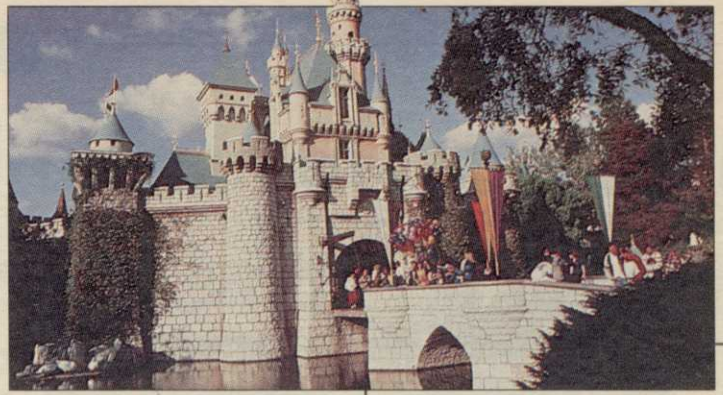
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## Supers descend on Anaheim

By PETER BLAIS

ANAHEIM, Calif. — Guess what, folks. This year's winner of the GCSAA's highest honor, the Old Tom Morris Award, will be there to receive her plaque.

Business kept last year's recipient, golfer Tom Watson, away from the New Orleans ceremony. Knowing he would not be able to personally receive the award, Watson requested the association give it to someone else.

But the group decided Watson was their man and honored him anyway. Although he taped an acceptance speech shown during the annual banquet, the five-time British Open champ's absence was definitely noticeable.

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## GCSAA faces opposition on proposed bylaw changes

By PETER BLAIS

This year's GCSAA annual meeting promises to be anything but a ho-hum affair. The proposed bylaw changes will see to that.

Recommendations to give the board of directors authority to set dues, get rid of delegate voting, change from a two-thirds to simple majority rule, and restructure membership classes have drawn fire and support from around the country.

The Organizational Study Committee recommended and the board of directors unanimously endorsed the changes, according to GCSAA President Bill Roberts.

Still, some board candidates, former association officers and members

have expressed reservations about the changes.

"Many people feel like these are being rammed down their throats," said board of director candidate George Renault of Burning Tree Club in Bethesda, Md. "They could all be voted down. It just stresses the need for better communication with the membership."

Board candidate Dave Fearis of Blue Hills Country Club in Kansas City, Mo., explained that the board has simply endorsed bringing the proposed changes before the membership for a vote rather than endorsing the actual changes themselves.

"Whether they pass or fail, they have the members interested and ac-

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## Revised green construction specs forthcoming

By MARK LESLIE

Major changes in the U.S. Golf Association greens construction specifications, to be unveiled this month, will save developers money and time, according to USGA Green Section National Director Jim Snow.

New guidelines will be released in January following a "thorough, scientific" 18-month review of the

After an 18-month review, USGA to release new guidelines this month

USGA's controversial construction recommendations by agronomists, scientists, architects, industry personnel and soil laboratory personnel.

Snow believes golf course builders, architects and developers will be happy with the results,

which will be available in a rough version in January and in a booklet come late winter or early spring.

Central to the changes is the intermediate pea-gravel layer, known as the choker layer, which Snow termed "controversial, not in terms of agronomics, but in terms

of money."

"I believe most of the time the choker layer is left out of the construction," Snow said. "We have found good specs for determining when you need it or not" based on particle size distribution of the root-zone mix."

The recommendations place more stress on laboratory tests, especially in

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## Low Country courses take proactive environmental tack

By HAL PHILLIPS

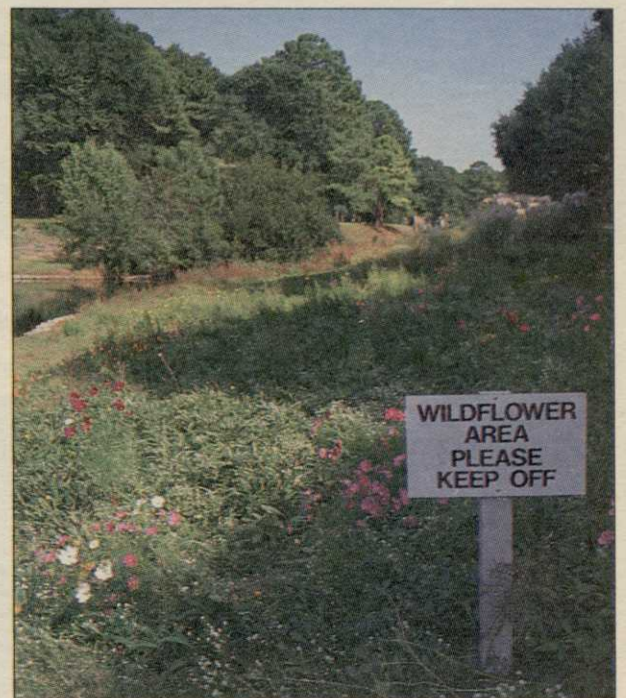
HILTON HEAD, S.C. — The words "coastal council" are enough to scare some golf course owners and developers half to death. However, a proactive approach taken in the Low Country of South Carolina has shown that regulators

and course owners can work together, to the benefit of all concerned.

Mike Tinkey is chief operating officer of Royal Golf & Tennis, Ltd. which manages 81 holes in and around Hilton Head. Since 1989, Tinkey has overseen a slew of environmental improvements: lagoon naturalization, bird sanctuaries, above-ground fuel storage, wildflower plantings, and conversion to irrigation using 100 percent effluent. All this was done with the active blessing of regulatory agencies.

"We went to the agencies and said, 'This is what we're

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Wildflower beds on the 4th hole at the Barony Course are among 4.5 acres planted on the Port Royal/Shipyard courses on Hilton Head.

## The bylaws: Time for a few changes?

Continued from page 1

five. I'm not in favor of the board having the power to set dues, requiring a simple majority rather than the present two-thirds membership vote to change the bylaws, and adding field staff," Fearis said.

While the amendments would be "helpful," vice presidential nominee Gary Grigg said he disagreed with those believing the association would be in dire straits if some or all of the amendments were defeated.

### SETTING DUES

Having the board set dues is a pocketbook issue. One need look no further than the recent national presidential race to see how people react to threats to their wallet.

Writing in September's *Golf Course Management*, Roberts defended taking power to raise dues out of the hands of membership and placing it with the board.

(Ed. note: Roberts requested a list of questions regarding the bylaw changes. They were provided. But Roberts said he would not to answer them.)

Members have traditionally supported proposed dues increases, the GCSAA president noted. But the time lag between when the extra revenue is needed and the annual meeting when members vote any increase can create problems, he said.

"During that delay, conditions change. Opportunities can be lost," explained Roberts in the *GCM*, article, adding that dues amount to just 22 percent of GCSAA revenues. The leadership already controls the other 78 percent generated through sources like trade shows and magazine advertising, he said.

Some members are concerned the board could institute increases to pay for programs or items they may feel are unnecessary. For example, Roberts has hinted at a \$40 to \$50 increase to pay for a nationwide field staffing program some feel should be initiated on a regional trial basis, if at all.

Others have questioned the need for an addition to the recently opened headquarters building in Lawrence, Kan., that was supposed to accommodate the organization into the foreseeable future. The costs of expanding GCSAA into the Asian market is another controversial issue.

"I would be concerned about these types of projects [headquarters expansion] becoming a normal occurrence if we had a board of directors that felt free to fund projects by increasing dues," wrote Bob Maibusch of Hinsdale (Ill.) Golf Club in a letter to the editor (see page 15).

Former (1981-82) GCSAA Presi-

dent Mike Bavier of Inverness Country Club in Palatine, Ill., headed the association when a similar amendment was defeated. "The bylaw change did not occur, and probably was for the better," he said. "Even if you trust people running the association at present, what about future boards."

Said Fearis: "I equate it to the power to vote for or against a tax increase. People like to have a voice in that. Some members feel dues increases are an item they should be able to do something about."

### VOTING CHANGES

The proposed voting changes are also sure to stir debate at the Jan. 30 annual meeting.

The board is recommending

eliminating delegate voting and replacing it with a "one person, one vote" system. Currently, members can either vote directly at the election, give their vote to a chapter delegate, or vote by proxy. The proposed change would allow members to vote by mail or during the annual meeting at the GCSAA conference and show.

Roberts said delegates have done a good job in the past and served a valuable service when the technology was unavailable to poll each member directly.

But noting the findings of one Organizational Study Committee member who recommended the bylaw change, Roberts wrote "we have actually encouraged a de-

gree of non-participation through the delegate process, because members feel that someone else is taking care of the all-important election decisions."

While admitting the delegate system has shortcomings (i.e. occasional delegates fancying themselves as power brokers), opponents of the change argue most delegates have responsibly represented their constituents. Delegates are among the best informed and most interested members of local chapters, putting them in an excellent position to represent members who don't have the time or inclination to study issues and candidates, they say.

Said Maibusch: "Most of the

golf course superintendents, at least in this area, are not actively pursuing information on the candidates or proposed bylaw changes, and would not be inclined to take an interest in this information.

"I have had a number of individuals tell me they are confident that their voting delegates and local association directors are the most informed people to be making these decisions."

Countered Roberts, "I think that view [membership apathy] fails to reflect any fundamental understanding of what has characterized this profession for years, and that is that we do care about our vocation and can make up our

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## Superintendents descend on Anaheim

Continued from page 1

This year, the GCSAA decided Dinah Shore was their woman. And the patron saint of the Ladies Professional Golfers Association will be at the Jan. 30 annual banquet to receive her award. So, too, will golfer Patty Berg. Berg received the award from Shore in 1986. This time Berg returns the favor to her old friend and will present the Old Tom plaque to Shore.

The annual banquet, which features a performance by the legendary Beach Boys, wraps up the eight-day event. The 64th annual conference and show kicks off the previous Saturday, Jan. 23, with two-day seminars and the 400-player annual golf tournament.

The Saturday-to-Saturday run is a departure from the normal weekday start and finish. Scheduling with the Anaheim Convention Center made the switch necessary.

The final 36 hours conflict with the PGA Merchandise Show in Orlando, Fla., a regrettable though unavoidable scheduling problem, according to show organizers.

A one-day computer and turf management seminar Sunday, Jan. 24 is followed by more one- and two-day sessions on Monday and Tuesday.

In response to superintendent requests for more information on golf course design, several well-known architects are leading a handful of the 60-plus seminars.

American Society of Golf Course Architect members Brian Silva and Jan Beljan discuss *Golf Course Restoration, Renovation and Construction Projects* the first Saturday and Sunday. Geoffrey Cornish and Robert Muir Graves give their critically acclaimed *Golf Course Design Principles* seminar Monday and Tuesday. *Pete and Alice Dye on Golf Course Design* is the title of Tuesday's one-day session by two of the industry's top names.

Other topics during the first four days of seminars range from water quality and wildlife habitat conservation

to employee safety training and managerial productivity.

Hall of Fame catcher Johnny Bench will be the keynote speaker at Tuesday night's Opening Session. Organizers are excited about some of the speakers, especially on the environment, on tap for the six concurrent education sessions scheduled for Wednesday.

Sessions by allied associations round out the conference. Among them are the Golf Course Builders Association of America on Thursday, American Society of Golf Course Architects on Friday, and United States Golf Association Green Section on Saturday.

Wednesday is Distributor Preview Day for the trade show, providing an opportunity for exhibitors to meet exclusively with current and potential distributors and dealers. The trade show officially opens Thursday, Jan. 28, running from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Thursday and Friday, and 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Saturday. The 175,000-square-foot show floor will house a record 600-plus exhibitors.

The annual meeting on the closing Saturday morning should be one of the most spirited affairs in recent memory, with heated debate expected on the proposed bylaw

changes. The election of Randy Nichols of Cherokee Town & Country Club in Dunwoody, Ga., as the new GCSAA president will highlight the election of officers.

The conference and show should draw 16,000 to 17,000 domestic and foreign visitors, which could surpass the record attendance set three years ago in Orlando. The recession held down last year's numbers in New Orleans, organizers said. Desert Storm and a souring economy did the same two years ago in Las Vegas, they added.

But with an improving economy, no military engagements threatening foreign travel and the proximity of this year's event to a major metropolitan area like Los Angeles, attendance is likely to improve.

## Bylaw changes?

Continued from page 22

own minds."

If most members voted by mail, there would be less chance to discuss issues at candidate briefings, wrote superintendent Palmer Maples Jr. of Summit Chase Country Club in Snellville, Ga., in the Georgia GCSA publication *Through the Green*.

With mail-in ballots, many people would vote for directors on the basis of name recognition alone, giving candidates from larger chapters with more financial resources an advantage over candidates from smaller ones, Bavier said. It would also eliminate any realistic chance for a person nominated from the floor, he added.

The "if-it-ain't-broke-don't-fix-it" attitude extends to those opposing the proposed change from a two-thirds to simple majority vote to amend bylaws. Intense lobbying by a vocal minority could sway half the eligible voters, putting too much power in the hands of a few, they say.

The current two-thirds rule forces an amendment to stand on its own merits, Bavier said. Directors must vigorously sell any change to members to gain approval, he added.

Amendment supporters contend current bylaws mean a one-third minority can override the desires of two-thirds of the members.

"A two-thirds requirement is overkill," Roberts wrote.

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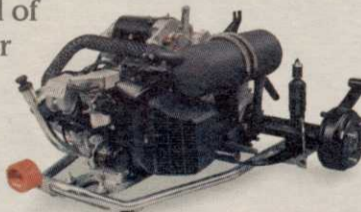
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