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GOLF COURSE NEWS

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DOGWOODS, ASH AT RISK
Dogwood anthracnose (as shown in the above leaf) is devastating America's dogwood trees from the Atlantic to the Mississippi. Meanwhile, Ash Yellows has stricken the nation's supply of green and white ash. See page 13.

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UGeorgia to create a 21-hole, working lab

By MARK LESLIE

GRIFFIN, Ga. — The nation's first research-intensive golf course is going out to bid.

The University of Georgia's 21-hole facility, located on land at the school's Experiment Station here, will be a living laboratory on which scientists will perform hands-on, innovative research into all aspects of maintenance from growing turfgrasses to pesticide fate.

The University of Georgia in April put out a request for proposals to private companies to build the facility on 165 acres the school owns. The university will receive some of the profits from the course operation to fund the research.

"We're excited about making this truly an all-research and education golf course," said Dr. Ed Kanemasu, research leader for University of Georgia's Crop and Soil Science Department.

Kanemasu, who has shepherded the plan through university and state protocol for two years, said: "We will be testing different grasses and work on irrigation, water use, movement of pesticides, herbicide treatments, and hopefully expand out to all of the things associated with golf courses — like mowing and the wear from equipment and golf carts."

"This will be intensive,
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The text of Paul Harvey's March 25 commentary:

Golfers at many or most of the magnificent golf courses are missing something important this spring — bird song. Greenskeepers have denied that their pesticides are killing their birds, but they can't deny it anymore. A conference yesterday in Wilmington, N.C., heard recommendations on how to make golf courses more environmentally friendly. Pesticides on golf courses are polluting coasting fishing waters in some places. More than 50 different chemicals are used on golf courses to kill insects and weeds and rodents, and regulations of the use of those chemicals is almost nonexistent. The USGA is presently completing its own three-year study, but the bottom line seems to be that some course designers and some who maintain them will not behave unless there are new laws to require it.

Harvey comment touches a nerve

By HAL PHILLIPS

WILMINGTON, N.C. — The golf industry is still steaming about a Paul Harvey radio report that condemned golf course maintenance practices as underregulated and irresponsible.

The syndicated report, issued by the venerable broadcaster on March 25, measured only 128 words in length (see text at left). But its effect on golf course industry members was felt across the nation.

"I became outraged upon listening to such nonsense, and such foolish accusations," wrote Gary Nokes in a letter to the editor (page 10). Nokes is superintendent at Bey Lea Municipal Golf Course in Tom's River, N.J. "I would like to show Mr. Harvey

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Golf industry differs on trade policies

By PETER BLAIS

Satisfied with their access to Japanese markets, golf industry suppliers are generally not among the American businesses supporting President Clinton's threats of higher tariffs if the Japanese refuse to open their doors to freer trade.

"We don't have a problem selling product in Japan," said Dennis Hays, director of the Oregon Seed Trade Association. "Some American seed producers are even Japanese owned. It's a good market for us."

In a formal late-March news conference, Clinton said he believed the Japanese un-

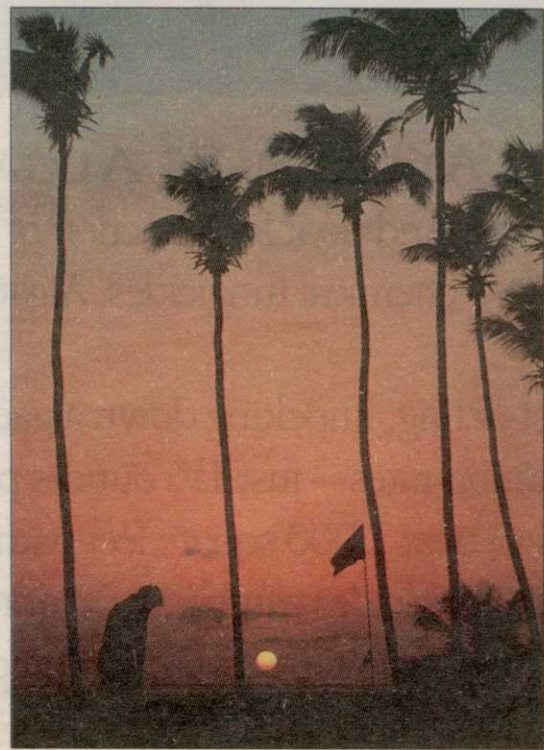
At odds with Clinton on Japanese tariffs

fairly prevent the sale of U.S. goods in their country. He promised to try to change that, possibly by raising tariffs on Japanese goods sold here.

"We hate to see the administration bashing Japan. We don't want higher tariffs on them," Hays said.

The seed industry's major problems involve other Pacific Rim nations — primarily China, Australia and New Zealand, Hays

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SUPERINTENDENT IN PARADISE
Super Focus on Mike Meehan, the man in charge of the Four Seasons resort on Nevis Island in the Caribbean. See page 14.

Working with lava...

Going with the flow

By MARK LESLIE

Lava: The substance of nightmares for golf course builders.

It rips up heavy machinery and adds mega-dollars to construction costs and months to timetables. It's so tough you sometimes have to blast it with dynamite. Tales about the hardened volcanic discharge are legend.

- Some tell of bulldozers falling through hollow "lava tubes" to solid ground 10 feet below.

- Surveyors reportedly wear out a pair of boots every couple of weeks tromping through it.

- You could turn on a fire
Continued on page 34

Harvey comments draw ire

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first hand the 800 to 1,000 geese that reside at Bey Lea all fall, winter and early spring, not to mention the number of various species of ducks, song birds, deer, rabbits, squirrels, groundhogs, fox, fish, etc.

"As an environmentally conscious golf course superintendent, I felt hurt and betrayed when I heard this report from an individual I admired even as a child."

Harvey, who did not attend the Wilmington conference, chose not to return phone calls from Golf Course News. According to his secretary, Harvey learned of the conference via a story on the Associated Press wire.

Comments from those who did attend, combined with examination of the local news stories, help explain some of Harvey's baseless conclusions.

The conference in question, "Is Golfing Green? The impact of golf courses on the coastal environment," was held March 24. It was sponsored by the North Carolina Coastal Federation (NCCF), the University of North Carolina at Wilmington, and the N.C. Cooperative Extension Service in an attempt to "define our goals," according to NCCF Executive Director Todd Miller.

"It's important to put Mr. Harvey's statement in context," Miller continued. "We viewed the meeting as a beginning point, a constructive way to define our goals as a federation."

"The nice thing about this conference was the overriding cooperative effort. The spirit of it was

very good. My impression, based on the presentations made, was there are issues to be concerned about. What was refreshing was the willingness of superintendents and architects to suggest adjustments."

Gene Maples, president of the North Carolina Turfgrass Council, was also in attendance and has fielded many angry calls regarding the Harvey commentary.

"This piece of his was the result of a local newspaper story that was picked up on the A.P. wire," Maples

explained. "There were several unfortunate, non-factual statements made by some of the speakers, which is their prerogative. But the conference — which was largely round-table discussions — was much, much more constructive than the news media would have you believe."

"It's clear to me that the reporters at this conference simply weren't paying attention."

Miller and Maples agreed that one of the conference's most weighty conclusions centered on North Carolina's lack of pesticide regulation.

"We don't have good nutrient

standards," Miller said. "There isn't any state guidance on this issue. That's one of the issues this conference was meant to address."

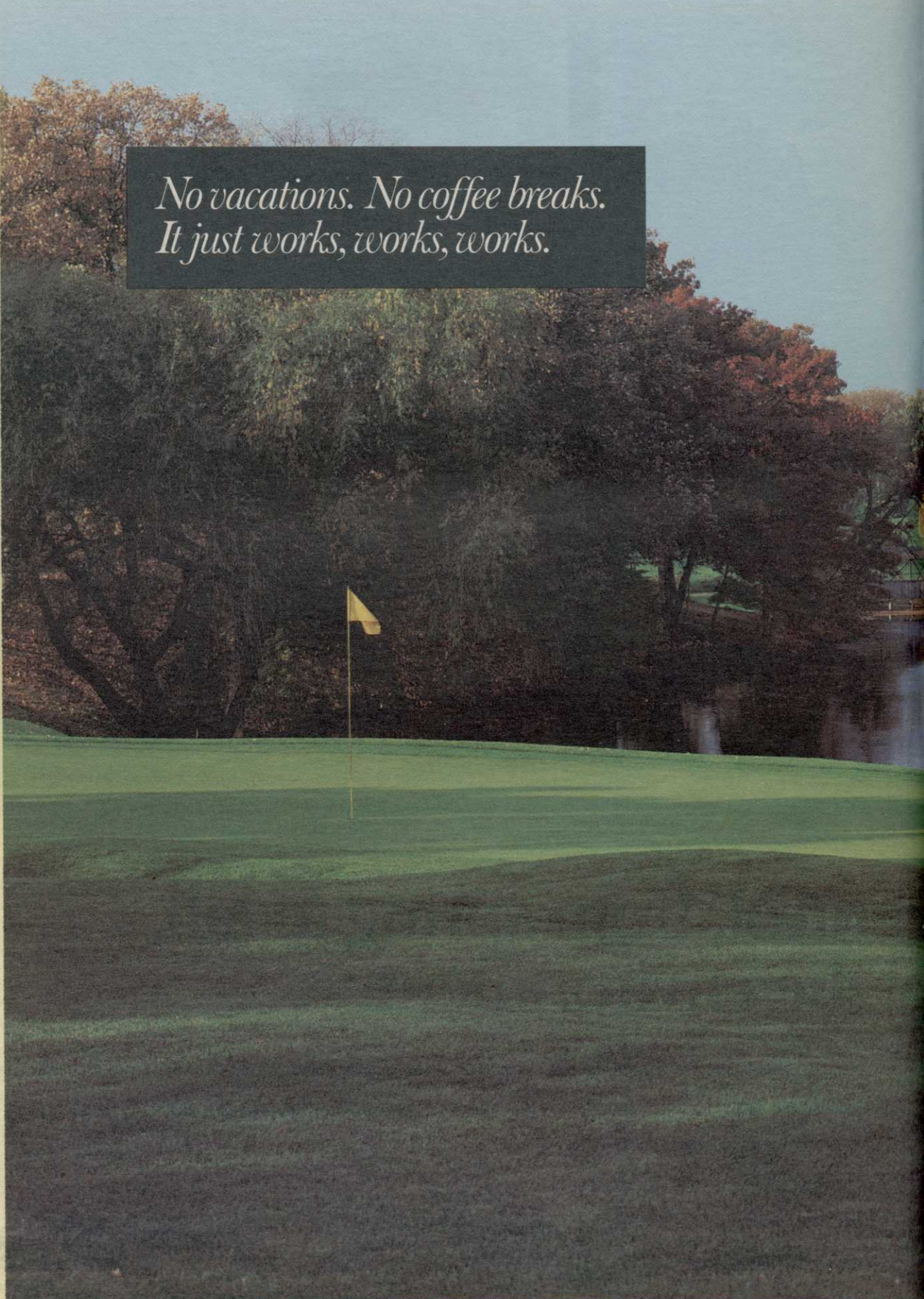
Commenting on the competitive nature of golf development and management in North Carolina, conference attendee Tom Marzolf — an architect with Fazio Golf Course Designers — told the Wilmington Morning Star that courses can't afford to adjust their maintenance practices unless their competitors do.

"It won't be done unless it's a law," Marzolf was quoted in the Star on March 25. "People won't spend money unless they have to. It all

gets down to dollar bills."

Harvey's reference to a lack of bird song is a mystery to those who attended the conference. In their stories of March 25, neither the Star nor the Raleigh News & Observer made any reference to pesticides' alleged negative effect on bird life. [The Environmental Protection Agency is still compiling and analyzing its findings from a comprehensive avian pesticide study.]

Incidentally, the New York State Audubon Society has garnered recent praise for its innovative program, funded by the USGA, which creates bird sanctuaries on golf courses.



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Maine supers honor trio

PORTLAND, Maine — Long-time superintendent Jim Diorio of Purpoodock Club was presented the Maine GCSA's Distinguished Service Award while Golf Course News contributing editor Vern Putney and sports writer Dick Doyle were given Honorary Service Awards at the annual Maine Turfgrass Conference and Show here.

Diorio is in his 30th year as a superintendent in three New England states and has been a club manager at two facilities including Purpoodock.

Diorio is past president of the Maine GCSA and chaired various chapter committees.

Citing Diorio's work at Augusta and Manchester (N.H.) country clubs, colleague Bob Browne said: "He's a fine role model for any superintendent or staffer. He plays the course and plays it well, so as to keep in closer touch with the course and the membership. He's a problem-solver, not a problem-maker."

Putney was cited for devotion and service to the golf industry in general, dating from his caddie days nearly a half-century ago at Portland Country Club.

Doyle's writing career has spanned close to 50 years as well.