

GOLF COURSE NEWS

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ORNAMENTALS COME OF AGE

Giant reed grass (above) is one of the many ornamental species used for both style and substance. See page 11.

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NGF study compares maintenance budgets

By MARK LESLIE

JUPITER, Fla. — Golf course superintendents, often asked to "perform magic with the same old things," may find artillery for their budget struggles in a new National Golf Foundation report, according to its project manager.

"A lot of superintendents get hammered pretty heavily because they are in charge of the biggest expense on a golf course," said Jerry Hinckley, who coordinated the report, *Understanding and Comparing Maintenance Budgets*. "Member committees and various people are constantly demanding more, yet aren't always willing to pay for it. They want [the conditions] they see on TV, and their expectations are very high."

Dividing the country into four regions and showing acreages and budgets at actual courses, the report demonstrates the relationship between expenditure and the number of acres maintained.

Most golf courses, Hinckley said, are "investing fairly heavily in improvements and new equipment every year. If you decide not to put any money back into the facility, above and beyond the basic maintenance, you're actually slipping back."

A panel of eight highly qualified golf course agronomists surveyed a

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Lake Michigan and skyscrapers frame the Family Dye's par-3 and practice-range project in Chicago.

Dyes take their act downtown

By MARK LESLIE

CHICAGO — People stuck in congested, downtown Chicago with a mere 90 minutes on their hands will soon have a chance to play nine famous par-3s from the Family Dye.

The Vintage Group, formed by ex-Dye Equities president Charles Tourtellotte, is in the midst of developing a one-of-a-kind golf facility on a tiny bit of property that used to be the Illinois Central Railroad yards. Come next spring, golfers can walk through the underground pedway that connects all of the office

buildings and hotels in the area, take the elevator to the clubhouse and tee off at the Illinois Golf Center — a mere long drive or two from Chicago River and Lake Michigan.

Tourtellotte hired the Denver-based Perry Dye to design a nine-hole par-3 course because "Perry has a reputation for being able to work with small sites."

Tourtellotte has leased the 30-acre plot for 15 years from Metropolitan Structures and the Whitman Corp., the partnership that owns and manages Illinois Center,

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More pump manufacturers join forces

By HAL PHILLIPS

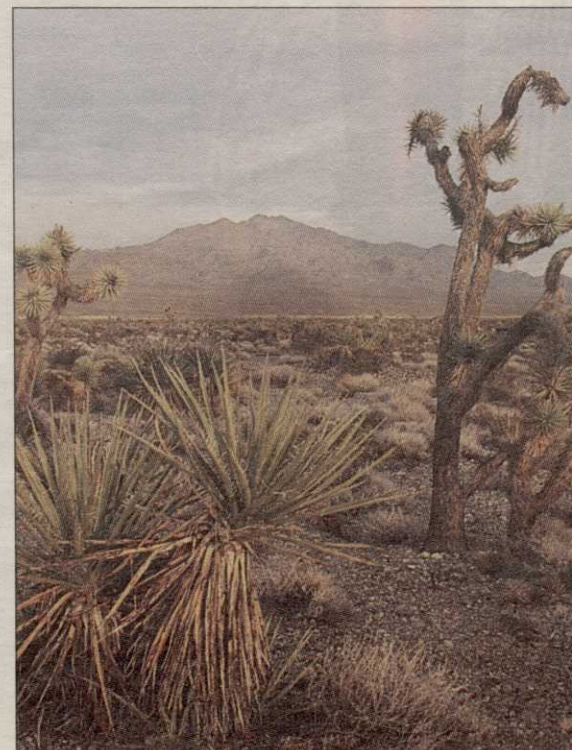
DALLAS — Following a distinct industry trend, Pumping Systems Inc. (PSI) and Flowtronex International have merged, promising immediate benefits to customers.

The merger follows two other marriages: Commercial Pump Service Inc. and Watertronics; and Syncroflo Inc. and Western Pumping Systems. Only Carroll Childers Co. of Houston stands "alone" among pump manufacturers in the golf industry.

Flowtronex, PSI merge; Childers the lone holdout

Carroll Childers, who formed PSI in the early 1970s before leaving to create his current company, said the merger "comes as no surprise as there have been numerous such mergers and also closings of pump station manufacturers in recent years due largely to overpopulation in the industry and to downturn in

Continued on page 34



The Paiute Indian Reservation will be home to a 72-hole, Landmark-developed golf and gambling resort.

Ex-Landmark employees re-emerge

By PETER BLAIS

LAS VEGAS, Nevada — A proposed 72-hole golf resort on the Paiute Indian Reservation is among several major projects being developed by newly formed Landmark Golf Co.

Several former Landmark Land Co. executives teamed up earlier this summer to form Landmark Golf. The limited liability corporation offers design, golf operation and real estate development expertise. The firm already has offices in Palm Desert, Calif., and Scottsdale, Ariz.

In addition to the Las Vegas venture, the firm has

Continued on page 30

Trend continues: Flowtronex joins forces with PSI

Continued from page 1

the economy."

Childers added that each of the two companies had "a vastly different, but both very successful, sales philosophy. The combination should prove interesting."

"It really is a match made in heaven," said David Brockway, who helped found Flowtronex in Tyler, Texas, in 1986 and will serve as president of the new Flowtronex PSI Ltd. "Everyone's excited about it. It's a case where one and one equal four. Basically, we had strengths where they had weaknesses, and *vice versa*."

Brockway said: "PSI has been known for

its very strong distributor and sales rep network. Flowtronex, on the other hand, has had a strong factory-direct sales network.

"PSI had made a real move over the last couple years into the technological forefront. That's been our [Flowtronex's] whole bag. We hung our hat on the VFD."

With the merger, signed on Sept. 8, Flowtronex is moving its operations to PSI's Dallas plant. PSI founder Jerry Pettengill is serving as chairman of the board and Emil Gram is general manager of the plant, where all production will take place.

"Competition was the driving force" for the merger, said Gram. "It's not unlike

what we're seeing throughout industry in general. We're ecstatic that we can take two good companies and make one great one.

"This merger will provide an outstanding opportunity to serve our buying and operating public."

Brockway pointed to improvements in service with the merger. Flowtronex and PSI each had 35 to 40 service centers. The 70 service centers "is unheard-of in this industry in terms of taking care of customers," he said. "In this industry, with this type of equipment, all of us realize service is the name of the game. The reason is that golf course superintendents are not trained

as mechanical or electrical engineers, and when the pump station goes down, they don't have people on the course who can fix it. They rely on the manufacturer."

Brockway said the new firm will do "a lot of product development that we couldn't do alone. People need to keep their eyes open for new developments."

Flowtronex PSI Ltd. will maintain close ties to Flowtronex International, which manufactures industrial pumping systems. And Brockway predicted, "We will continue to get spinoff development from that."

Flowtronex employed 37 in its turf division, while PSI employed around 65. Flowtronex employees will either move to Dallas, be absorbed in Flowtronex International, or elect to leave the company, Brockway said.

Brockway predicted the new company "will more aggressively pursue the total global market because that's where we will get the biggest increase in sales."

PSI and Flowtronex both have been independently selling equipment in Asia. "That is a very important market to us. And we are going to become a bigger player in that market," he said.

Stateside, Childers said the merger will help in one way: It will give customers "one less proposal to consider."



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Earthgro-Harmony joint agreement

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each firm by combining Earthgro's extensive marketing and distribution networks with Harmony's fertilizer/manufacturing know-how and capabilities.

Earthgro manufactures and distributes bagged soils, natural fertilizers and bark products from Virginia to Maine, while Harmony is best known for its patented, slow-release nitrogen technology. For more information, contact Earthgro at 203-642-7591 or Harmony at 804-523-2849.

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