

GOLF COURSE NEWS

THE NEWSPAPER FOR THE GOLF COURSE INDUSTRY

A UNITED PUBLICATION
VOLUME 5, NUMBER 3
MARCH 1994 • \$4.50

INSIDE

Of Surfers & Seals

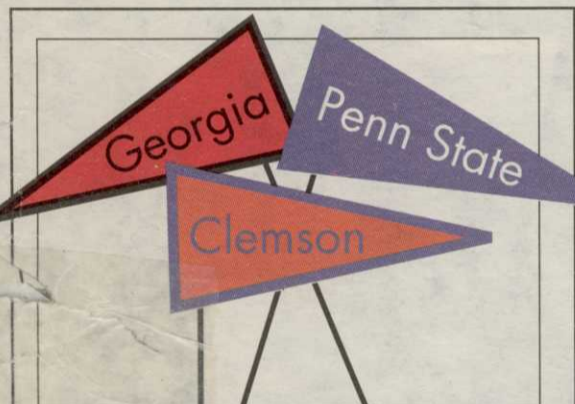
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Bye, Bye Birdie

Some birds you want, some you don't. Learn how to attract purple martins and get rid of geese 16, 70



COLLEGES TAKE SPIRITED RESEARCH STANCE

Spring break is fast approaching, but the nation's collegiate turf programs continue to produce. Working golf course laboratories will soon be realities at Clemson, UGeorgia and Penn State. Meanwhile, superintendents are scrambling to attract the best turf scholars. See pages 15, 21-23.

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Mortality study raises questions, eyebrows

By HAL PHILLIPS

DALLAS—Golf course superintendents were 79 percent more likely to contract large-intestinal cancer and 36 percent more likely to contract lung cancer than the public at large, according to phase-one findings of a University of Iowa mortality study commissioned by the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America (GCSAA).

Death certificates of 618 former GCSAA members — who died between 1970 and 1992 — were gathered as part of the research, conducted by Dr. Burton Kross,

UI associate professor of preventive medicine and mental health. Of the 618 deaths, 179 were cancer related.

"Because this is a statistical study, you can't establish any cause-and-effect relationship from the data," said Kross, who presented the study's findings at February's GCSAA conference in Dallas. "Results of the mortality study provide GCSAA with a scientific basis to encourage stop-smoking programs and improved pesticide-handling practices among its members.

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GCSAA WRAP-UP

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Golf Cars: Who has the purchasing authority?

By PETER BLAIS & HAL PHILLIPS

SAN ANTONIO, Texas — Wine, lockers, E-Z-GO, dinnerware, clubhouse architects, Club Car, chocolate mints, table linen, Yamaha, accounts software, tennis court contractors, Melex.

And so it goes, as one strolls the aisles and gazes into the booths at the Club Managers Association of America annual exposition here.

This is the third national trade show that golf car and utility vehicle manufacturers regularly attend. Those companies are also a major presence at the annual superintendents' and golf professionals' shows. They are easily the most visible segment of the golf industry to attend all three.

Just who is responsible for ultimately deciding what brand of golf cars to buy?

"This is something we've struggled to define since I

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PUBLIC ENEMY #1

Mole crickets cause more damage to Southeastern golf courses than any other pest. How do you kill 'em? Superintendents and scientists — including the University of Florida's Dr. Howard Frank — are experimenting with traditional and biological weapons. See special report, pages 24-26.

Rohm & Haas wins Dimension sweepstakes

By HAL PHILLIPS

ST. LOUIS — We have a winner.

After months of speculation and negotiation, Monsanto has signed a letter of intent to sell Dimension turf herbicide and other products in its worldwide pyridine family of chemistry to Philadelphia-based Rohm and Haas Co.

The sale is expected to be completed by mid-year, according to James Budzynski, Monsanto's product director for dithiopyr, the active ingredient in Dimension. No

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Dr. James Watson

Architects honor Dr. Watson with '94 Ross Award

By MARK LESLIE

"Surprised but delighted" at his selection, turfgrass research and management pioneer Dr. James

R. Watson will receive the American Society of Golf Course Architects' (ASGCA) 1994 Donald Ross Award.

A vice president and agronomist with The Toro Co. who has been working with golf course architects on turf problems for more than 40 years, Watson will accept the award at the annual Ross Award Dinner on April 18, at the Olympic Club in San Francisco. The banquet will highlight the society's annual meeting.

Only the second agronomist chosen for the award in its 19-year history, Watson explained: "Their [architects] job isn't finished with the design. They still have to oversee construction of the golf course. A lot of the work I've done has involved soils for putting greens, modification of fairways and management of the golf course from the turfgrass standpoint.

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The stately 18th at Minisceongo Golf Club in Rockland, N.Y. This Roy Case design opens in June.

New Course Listings Page 45

Robert Hook photo

Who's got the buying power?

Continued from page 1

first came to E-Z-GO," said Ron Skenes, the firm's communications manager. "If our sales representative has done his homework, he'll know who the decision-makers are. But it's very fragmented."

Skenes explained that an exit poll conducted after the 1993 GC-SAA show indicated 26 percent of superintendents claim they make the golf car buying decisions. A similar survey at the '93 PGA Merchandise Show indicated 25 percent of the professionals claim they

purchase the fleets.

"That leaves the rest of the decision-making to a combination of manager, owner and committees at private clubs," said Skenes.

"It's a mixture," agreed Melex's Jim Moran. "Sometimes it's the club manager, sometimes the superintendent and sometimes the pro. Then you have the board of directors and owners. They may make the decision themselves, seek input from one, or rely on the advice of all three."

While there are no hard-and-fast rules, the identity of the deci-

sion-maker generally varies by region, according to manufacturer representatives.

"In the Midwest, superintendents tend to be more involved in that type of decision," said Skenes. Why?

"I'm not sure," he said.

Ernie Stock, ClubCar's South-west regional sales manager, has a theory: "With the strong influence of turf schools like Penn State and Ohio State, superintendents in the Northeast and Midwest often have a big influence in purchasing all rolling stock."

"In the Sunbelt, it's more likely to be the club manager or pro.

Then you have the buying groups, like American Golf Corp. and ClubCorp. Those decisions are made at corporate headquarters. At the older, more-established clubs, it's often a committee decision made by the board with input from the pro."

Carl Schenken, a San Antonio Yamaha distributor, basically agreed with Stock.

"They've embraced the true general manager concept more in the North," Schenken said. "There, the manager and the superintendent usually make the decision. In the South, the pros and board of directors seem to

get more involved."

Pros are generally losing some clout, at least in Texas, according to Rodney Schlipf, a sales representative in E-Z-GO's Houston operation.

"Boards seem to be relying on the recommendation of the general manager rather than the pro in our area," he said. "I like dealing with superintendents because they generally have complete control over their utility vehicles. As for golf cars, in the Houston area, anyway, I'd say general managers make 60 percent of the decisions, pros 35 percent and superintendents 5 percent."

Todd Sauey, president of Columbia ParCar sees the market as segmented, but fairly regimented within each classification. Excluding fleet purchases — where management companies make bulk purchases — Sauey believes the market breaks down this way:

Owners generally make the golf car buying decisions at daily-fee courses, with input from the pro and superintendent. At private country clubs, the pro or club manager advises the green committee, which usually has final say. At resort facilities, where the top executives are not as heavily involved in the golf operation, superintendents and professionals share purchasing power. At municipal courses, pros have more consultative power — but the city controller signs off on everything.

While attending all three trade shows is time-consuming and costly, the manufacturers all expect to continue doing so.

"We want to show our support for each group," Melex's Moran explained.

"I tell our salespeople to never ignore the superintendent, club manager or pro. If two of them have left when the club's about to make a buying decision, you still have a friend in the third."

Dos Pueblos

Continued from page 3

tions allow a golf course on agriculturally zoned land.

"If the Commission denied the permit in April, we'd have to decide whether to litigate or seek a rezoning. Either way, we are committed to the project."

Local government officials see the course helping the environment, Hollis said. Aging petroleum equipment would be removed, the site cleaned and native grasses planted wherever possible, he explained.

The ARCO representative noted the course will use wastewater from a \$22 million reclamation facility expected to operate at no more than 25 percent of capacity when it opens later this year.

As for the course construction itself, Coore and Crenshaw are noted for minimal earthmoving. Approximately 100,000 cubic yards will be relocated at Dos Pueblos.

"There will be a short-term dust emission at worst," Hollis said.



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