

GOLF COURSE NEWS

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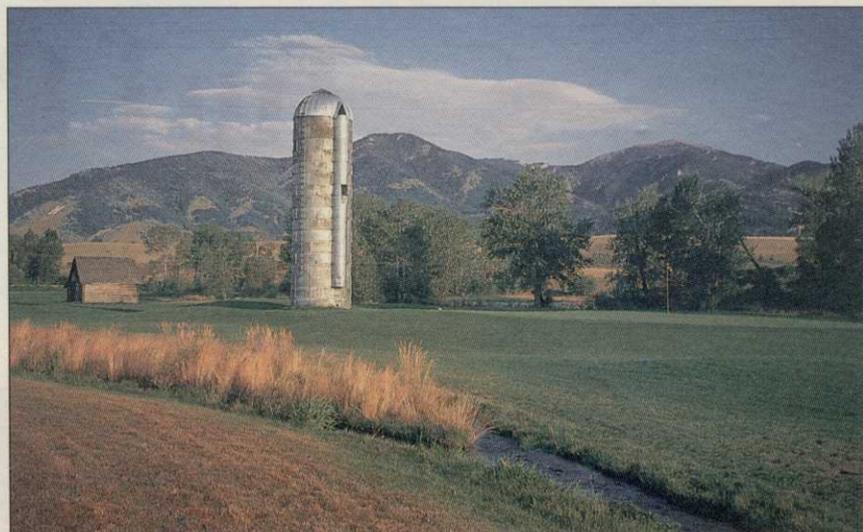
By MARK LESLIE

FAR HILLS, N.J. — Adherent on taking its environmental research to the next level, both scientifically and practically, the United States Golf Association (USGA) is funding another \$1.5 million for research over the next three years.

Having spent \$3.2 million on environmental research projects from 1991-93, USGA officials have decided to perform further studies on some projects and add a new practical angle, investigating and reporting Best Management Practices for golf course superintendents to use in everyday work.

Saying the USGA and entire golf industry have an obligation to minimize environmental impacts of course maintenance, Green Section Research Director Dr. Michael Kenna said: "In instances where a superintendent has used proper fertilization, mowing heights, irrigation and all other possible practices but still has a disease, insect or weed infestation, what techniques can he follow that

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BIG DOINGS IN BIG SKY COUNTRY

A silo behind the 5th green sits as a sentinel to its past, while a 568-yard monster looms foreboding in its future. But for now, Bridger Creek Golf Course in Bozeman, Mont., stands as a public nine-hole facility that makes proud its operator — Great Northern Golf Co. See story page 36.

Jones II: 'I think public golf is the future'

Architect to keynote day two at Expo

By MARK LESLIE

ORLANDO — World-renowned golf course architect Robert Trent Jones Jr. will join Arnold Palmer as a keynote speaker at Golf Course Expo, the nation's premier event for public-access golf courses planned here, Nov. 11-12.

Jones, of the legendary golf course design family, will talk at 9 a.m. Saturday, Nov. 12, and sign his book, "Golf by Design: How To Lower Your Score by Reading the Features of a Golf Course," released this year by Little, Brown.

Golf Course Expo, sponsored by *Golf Course News*, is the only trade show and education conference

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Robert Trent Jones Jr.

MORE EXPO NEWS

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WINTER PREP

Combatting snow mold, pink and gray, is a major problem faced by Northern superintendents as they prepare for the winter months ahead. For a special report, see page 22.

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Suichang bringing endophyte strains to bents and blues

By PETER BLAIS

A Jacklin Seed Co. researcher is busily trying to develop endophyte-containing strains of Kentucky bluegrass and bentgrass, breakthroughs that could dramatically reduce the need for herbicide and fun-

gicide treatments.

Endophytic fungi are common in tall fescue, perennial ryegrass and fine fescues. Endophytes make turf more resistant to insects and such diseases as dollar spot and summer patch, according to Suichang Sun, who recently received a master's degree in turfgrass breeding from Rutgers University.

Endophytes either occur naturally or can be artificially inoculated. But they have not been found or successfully inoculated into two of the most widely used cool-season turfgrasses,

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Grant Spaeth

Spaeth, Lurie look to form international reservation network

By MARK LESLIE

SAN FRANCISCO — The Ticketron of Golf. That's what former U.S. Golf Association

President C. Grant Spaeth and former San Francisco Giants owner Bob Lurie believe they have created, along with Jay S. Troutman, founder and president of Aptech Computer Systems in Pittsburgh.

PAR Business Systems, led by Spaeth and financially backed by Lurie, has bought Aptech's TeeTime Network division and formed PAR Golf Systems, Inc. The alliance combines PAR Business Systems' proprietary golf course management software and TeeTime Network's tee-time reservation software.

"The Aptech acquisition provides the potential of a reservation service comparable to that which we now find in hotels, theaters and rental cars," said Spaeth. "If you have a demand for golf, and a couple of thousand

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GOLF COURSE



EXPO

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GOLF COURSE EXPO

USGA to address public-access concerns

By MARK LESLIE

ORLANDO — The U.S. Golf Association Green Section, having helped coordinate the maintenance track, is providing three speakers to Golf Course Expo — the only national conference and trade show held for public-access golf facilities.

Patrick O'Brien, director of the Green Section's Southeastern Region, will discuss "Maintenance on a Shoestring." His colleagues, Florida Region Director John Foy and agronomist Chuck Gast, will also share their expertise. Foy will reveal results of the last three years of USGA-funded research and Gast will talk on water, energy and wild-life conservation measures.

Also in the maintenance track, PGA Tour's Cal Roth, who oversees maintenance at the 14 Tournament Players Clubs, will talk on maximizing equipment use and life. Joel Jackson, superintendent at Walt Disney Co.'s Magnolia

It's critical to be very smart when you're buying equipment, so that it matches the needs of your course.'

— USGA's Patrick O'Brien

Course, and Don Tolson of Fox Hollow at Lakewood in Lakewood, Colo., will discuss maintaining quality turf in the face of high traffic. And Pat McHugh, director of golf course maintenance and grounds for the five courses at Doral Resort & Country Club in Miami, will address staffing for success.

"Turf equipment, chemicals and fertilizers are very expensive," said the USGA's O'Brien. "It's critical to be very smart when you're buying equipment so that it matches the needs of your course. It is the same with pesticides and

fertilizers, and it's critical to use them properly and in the most efficient manner. Even when you're maintaining a course on a shoestring, you like to have it weed-free because that's one of the major things golfers expect."

O'Brien, who consults at courses throughout the Southeast and the Caribbean, said he intends to give conference attendees a lot of "take-home lessons." "Especially for those who have only \$150,000 to \$200,000 a year to spend on a course, I can help them get the most bang for their buck," he said.

Matching equipment purchases to a course's maintenance needs are make-or-break decisions, said O'Brien. He told of a course with a maintenance budget less than \$150,000 that had one fairway mower, a five-plex hydraulic unit. "Unfortunately, they had Bermudagrass fairways and were



AGRONOMY PROGRAM

maintaining 40 to 45 acres of them. They were only able to mow about twice a week because the mower is so slow," he said.

"Though it is great for private clubs, that equipment was not well-suited for 'maintenance on a shoestring.' That club needed a seven- or nine-gang mower pulled by a tractor, so they could mow the fairways five times a week, essential for Bermudagrass.

"They were sold a bill of goods. They spent \$40,000 for that piece of equipment and it was not for their situation. I see this sort of thing all the time."

Case study: Marketing advice that resulted in more revenue

By MARK LESLIE

F RANCESTOWN, N.H. — It's called guerrilla marketing, and Jeff Ojala says it works.

After the 1993 *Golf Course News* management and marketing conference, the predecessor to this fall's Golf Course Expo, Ojala "did some serious guerrilla marketing" at Torrey Pines Resort. "Using the ideas we learned, we have increased our green-fee income 100 percent — and we're 40 miles from nowhere," he said.

"I got a lot out of the conference," said Ojala, Torrey Pines' general manager, adding the facility has more than tripled its income from memberships and green-fee income "will increase significantly."

"We have turned this place around substantially, and we're very excited about its potential," he continued.

Among his coups in the last year, Ojala:

- Pursued and signed on the Roland Stafford Golf School, which was ending a relationship with a Vermont course. Newspaper advertising has brought "overwhelming business" to the school, he said.
- Parlayed free television exposure, including a travelogue and golf tips from Stafford that air three or four times a week on WMUR-TV, Channel 9.
- Offered special golf outing packages.
- Developed close relationships with area sports media, giving free club

memberships with all the privileges.

- Computerized the business operation, offering plastic member cards with charging privileges.

"We came away from that conference and got very aggressive," Ojala said. "I was able to network with a lot of great people and am excited about this year."

Golf Course Expo, which will be held Nov. 11 and 12 in Orlando, Fla., is the outgrowth of three years of marketing conferences *Golf Course News* has conducted. In addition to the Golf Course Expo trade show, the event will feature educational tracks in golf course management and marketing, development and maintenance.

The National Golf Foundation is co-



MANAGEMENT & MARKETING PROGRAM

sponsoring the development track, while the U.S. Golf Association Green Section has been instrumental in coordinating the maintenance track.

Jones to keynote Day II of Golf Course Expo

Continued from page 1

devoted to superintendents, managers and developers of public-access golf facilities. Following Palmer's keynote address at 9 a.m. Friday, Nov. 11, the trade show will run all day both days while concurrent educational sessions will be held in the afternoons covering maintenance, development, and marketing & management.

Like his father, Jones can say the sun never sets on his golf courses. From North and Central America to Africa to Europe and Asia, he and his colleagues at Robert Trent Jones II International have designed more than 150 golf courses from their headquarters in Palo Alto, Calif.

While he is famous for such resort tracks as Princeville in Kauai, Hawaii, and the Links at Spanish Bay in Pebble Beach, Calif., Jones has made a major imprint on public-access golf in recent years.

"And now," he said, "with our own money, I am a major partner in a group that is building a public daily-fee course at Eagle Point, a suburb of Medford, Ore. We broke ground on July 15.

"This is not just words. I believe in it."

Jones has numbered among his recent clients counties, municipalities, public utilities and private entrepreneurs who have hired him to design their public daily-fee courses. And these courses illustrate the variety and success of courses from high-end to munis.

The town of Mountain View, Calif., the University of Wisconsin, DuPage County Airport, and the partnership of entrepreneur Ron Dalby and a public utility have all built Jones-designed courses.

The Mountain View project, Shoreline Park Golf Course, sits on a landfill and includes an amphitheater for outdoor events.

The University of Wisconsin's University Ridge Golf Course was built by a foundation of benefactors and given to the university. "They say, 'The borders of the golf course are the borders of the state,'" Jones said. "There haven't been many university golf courses built lately. We started a trend where the universities are beginning to look at new courses... Most of the university courses make as much money or close to as much as football, if they are properly operated."

The Orchards in Detroit, a high-end daily-

Continued on next page

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GCSAA approves CEUs for Expo

ORLANDO, Fla. — The Golf Course Superintendents Association of America has awarded 0.6 Continuing Education Units (CEUs) for the Golf Course Expo conference.

It is the responsibility of each certified golf course superintendent to individually document event attendance on the affidavit form that will be supplied to all conference registrants. To receive credit for participation, you must forward

the affidavit within 30 days. Applicability for CEUs from other groups should be verified with the superintendent's professional board.

Continuing education credits can be earned by attending any of the three Golf Course Expo conference programs: Agronomy, Management and Development.

For more information, call the Golf Course Expo hotline at 207-846-0600.

Jones to keynote

Continued from previous page
fee course, was built by Dalby and Michcon Gas Co. on a natural gas field.

The DuPage County Airport facility is an example of using public-sector land.

"Smaller, remote towns like Carrabassett [Maine] which has Sugarloaf Golf Club, or large cities like Chicago and Detroit, and smaller towns like Medford [Ore.] all need accessible golf," Jones continued.

"And that's what we're trying to provide.

"I think public golf is the future."

A former president of the American Society of Golf Course Architects, Jones is a former chairman of the California State Park and Recreation Commission and was inducted into the California Golf Hall of Fame in 1991.

The 1961 graduate of Yale University has many friends and acquaintances in the world of international politics and served in 1980 as the U.S. delegate to the Helsinki Accords Conference and as a delegate to the Bi-national Governors' Conference in Mexico.

Marketing Idea

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"There are a lot of longest-drive and hole-in-one contests, but they either limit the number of people who have a shot at winning to the big hitters or are almost impossible to do [score a hole-in-one]. But just about anyone has a shot at this," Ridge said.

The golf course goes on the line only if the minimum 850 golfers sign up and pay the \$2,000 entry fee by Sept. 1. Ridge said he could still run the tournament with just the \$1 million prize if 600 to 700 register.

Entry fees are held in escrow by a Louisville accounting firm and will be refunded if too few golfers register. In that case, Ridge could be out a significant amount in promotional funds he has spent on print (full page ad in *GolfWeek*) and television advertising (spots on ESPN golf shows).

But if the 850 sign up at \$2,000 apiece, and the winner takes the \$1 million, Ridge stands to make \$700,000 (less his promotional costs). If the 1,500 he expects or the 3,000 maximum register, his profit could be much greater.

The event has also generated extra rounds this year as curious golfers have come out to play simply to see the hole where the event will take place, Ridge added.

Anyone can enter the closest-to-the-hole contest, pro or amateur golfer. Among the 100 golfers who had signed up by late July were six Nike Tour players. Ridge expects a PGA Tour player or two may also register.

"After all, how many of them will ever make \$1 million in their careers," he asked.

The \$2,000 entry fee entitles the entrant to one shot. But the person or representative from the group that puts up the money doesn't necessarily have to take it. For instance, 10 members at a club can put up \$200 apiece and send their pro to take the shot. If they put up \$2,000 apiece, the pro could take 10 shots.

The event begins Oct. 3 with six days of qualifying. The four closest to the pin each day advance to the final round Oct. 9. Any ties for the fourth closest will also advance.

On Oct. 9, each of the 24 finalists (plus any ties) gets four shots apiece. The closest to the hole wins.

Why did Ridge select the 8th hole? "It's a fair hole," Ridge said. "Everything is right there in front of you."

The 8th has bermudagrass tees and a bentgrass green. The tee shot has a 130-yard carry over a pond. A 10-yard apron extends from the water to the front of the 4,000-square-foot green. The pin will be placed dead center on the green, about 5 yards from the apron.

"Three feet from the hole could win it," Ridge predicted. "I've been playing here 20 years, and I've never been closer than 2 or 3 feet. And then just a few times."



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