

GOLF COURSE NEWS

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Supers combat stress, burnout

Poor delegation skills a cause

By J. BARRY MOTHE

SAN FRANCISCO — A failure to delegate work and soaring expectations are the leading causes of stress among golf course superintendents, according to a psychologist who has worked closely with the subject for several years.

"Golf course superintendents tend to be perfectionists and think, 'If I don't do it, it won't be right,'" said Dr. Bree Hayes, who has led stress management seminars for the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America (GCSAA). Hayes will lead another such seminar during the GCSAA Show and

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Survey says: Architects don't agree on very much

By MARK LESLIE

The diversity of golf course architects is matched only by their opinions on such topics as the availability of financing, designing courses with less irrigated acreage, and whether "minimalism" has returned to design.

In an exclusive *Golf Course News* survey of the country's 200-odd architects, respondents shared some up-close insights into a world that spans irrigation technology, corporate finance and turfgrass research.

The most disparate answers came from the questions on minimalism, whether money spent to build courses is declining, and whether clients are finding it easier to get fi-

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GOLDEN GATES BECKON SUPERINTENDENTS

Comprehensive GCSAA Show section with schedules, tourney preview, awards and things to do in S.F. See p. 19

195 Show Me!



The San Francisco skyline seen through the suspension cables on the Golden Gate Bridge, while a cable car (top left) travels down Grant Street through Chinatown.

1994 Openings	9	18	Totals	
Daily Fee	91	89	180	New Facilities
Municipal	9	22	31	
Private	3	18	21	
Daily Fee	94	9	103	Expansions
Municipal	18	3	21	
Private	22	3	25	
Grand Total	237	144	381	

NGF REPORTS RECORD YEAR

Preliminary figures from the National Golf Foundation show that 1994 was another big year for golf course openings — another record-setter, in fact. For more facts and figures, see page 3.

COURSE MAINTENANCE

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New Congress might result in mixed golf bag

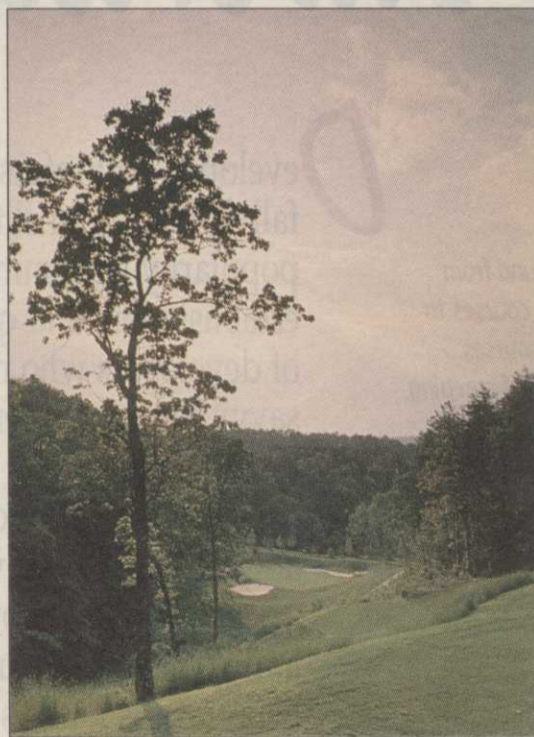
By PETER BLAIS

WASHINGTON, D.C. — The swing to a more conservative, Republican-controlled Congress is good news for the golf industry but could lead the Clinton Administration to employ regulatory agencies to institute more liberal policies, according to industry representatives.

"The new Congress will impact golf clubs for the better," said Elizabeth Kirby-Hart, vice president of legal and government relations for the National Club Association. "The laws and regulations we'll be looking at should be far less onerous than before."

Added Kathy Driggs of the Club Managers Asso-

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CLUTE NAMED BUILDER OF THE YEAR

Paul Clute and Associates, which built Tom Fazio's award-winning Old Overton Club in Vestavia Hills, Ala., has been named the Golf Course News Builder of the Year. For this story and others, including GCN's Best Maintained Course on the PGA Tour, as voted by the players, see page 71.

As distribution shrinks, firms go factory-direct

By HAL PHILLIPS

An increasing number of industry firms are marketing their products directly to golf courses, as the spectrum of distribution lines continues to narrow. Industry observers agree that, as the golf market continues to mature, more and more companies will abandon traditional lines of distribution for the factory-direct approach.

The service-oriented, two-step nature of golf purchasing will never disappear: "You don't just get a Toro Greensmower

in a crate," said Chuck Champion, general sales manager of Overland Park, Kan.-based Kalo, Inc., a manufacturer of wetting agents. "You will always need that relationship with the distributor."

However, manufacturers of chemical and fertilizer products, which don't necessarily require that level of service, are beginning to take the factory-direct route which emphasizes price above all else.

"Magnesium is magnesium is magne-

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On the issues of the day, golf course architects have little consensus

Continued from page 1

financing for their projects.

- Fifty-seven percent said developers are not spending less on their courses, while 38 percent said they are.

- Forty-eight percent said financing is getting easier for clients to find, while 47 percent think it is not.

- Thirty-nine percent declared that minimalism (less earth-moving) has returned to design, compared to 31 percent who said it has not, and 30 percent who

responded in other ways.

In responding to other questions, 86 percent said they are specifying use of newly developed turfgrasses, though many are doing so only to a limited extent; 79 percent said radio-operated irrigation systems are becoming more popular; and 65 percent said they are designing courses to have less area needing irrigation.

MINIMALISM

Golf Course News asked

whether minimalism has returned to design, and Desmond Muirhead, known for his provocative layouts, had this to say: "Minimalism is a movement in art. Unless it is very strong and well executed, there is a yawning emptiness to a golf course designed with minimalism as a goal, somewhat like a stripped-down Chevrolet. By the same token, I think the excesses of the 1980s, which required 14 men on Flymos to maintain the bunker slopes, are

on their way out."

We took that as a "Yes."

But Bob Cupp took exception. "Some people are bragging [that they are minimalists], but not really," he said.

Brian Curley of Landmark Golf Co. said minimalism has not returned but acceptance of less earth-moving has.

Still, many others felt minimalism "never left," or, as Clyde Johnston added: "Public focus was on [Pete] Dye, [Jack] Nicklaus, etc."

Robert Muir Graves said, "We never maximized."

Mark Mungeam of Cornish and Silva put it this way: "I think a lot of architects like to call their work 'minimalist' or 'traditional' — after the client has spent \$3 million to achieve it — because that is the fad right now."

Taking a cue from his belief that less money is being spent on courses, Don Knott wrote, "Lower budgets equal minimalism."

Which leads to the question on expenditures.

CONSTRUCTION SPENDING

Saying clients are not spending less, Florida's Ted McAnlis explained, "Costs continue to rise," while Mungeam added: "More emphasis is being put on USGA [U.S. Golf Association] specs for greens and better mixes for tees. Plus, environmental protection such as monitoring or sediment and erosion control are all more expensive."

Mike Hurdzan said expenditures are not declining "because upscale is 'in' and upscale takes bucks."

Bill Coore, Ben Crenshaw's design partner, replied "No" because of "poor site selection and architects' and developers' desires to 'overstate' in order to gain attention for their projects."

And Richard Phelps of Colorado agreed: "Clients still want what they see in magazines."

But, others felt less money is being spent. Hale Irwin and Arnold Palmer's partner, Ed Seay, agreed — Irwin saying "fewer fancy" designs being done while Seay added that clients want "less frills." Kenneth Ezell of Florida said he found there is less funding and more equity.

And Donald Sechrest of Missouri said simply that more public [less costly] courses are being built.

Claiming "undoubtedly" less money is spent in the United States, Muirhead explained this is so because of "the great decrease in membership fees and the tendency to build public courses."

John Sanford of Florida said less is being spent because so often "golf must stand alone" and other amenities fall by the wayside.

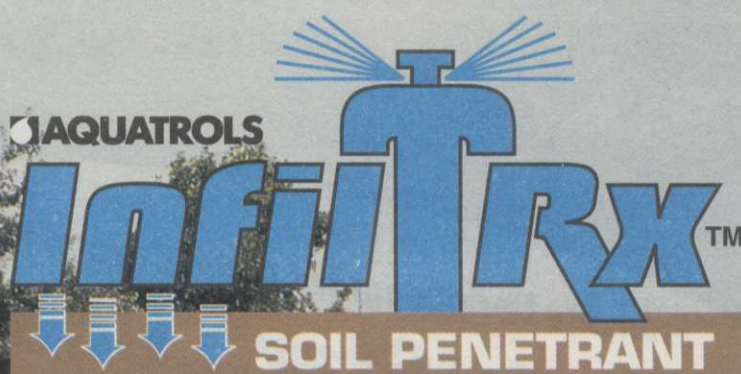
Bob Leu of Gilmore Graves Golf in Wisconsin said: "The golfing public can't pay the bill for the high-end courses."

FINDING FINANCING

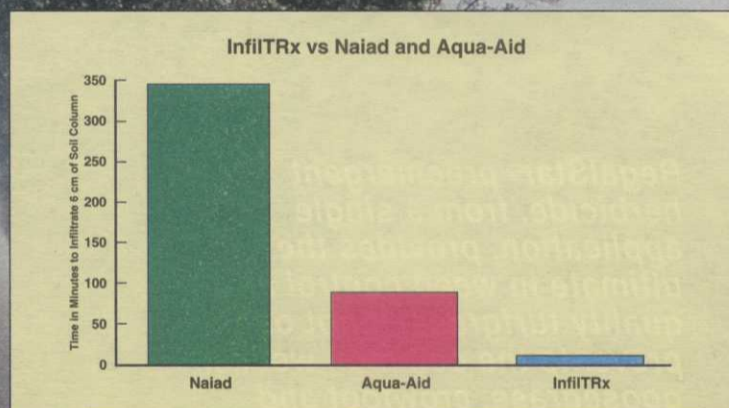
Here the responses were evenly split, for whatever reason — the region of the country or the types of clients individual architects secure, for instance.

Continued on next page

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Designing issues bring little consensus

Continued from previous page

"Still horrible," said Ray Richard, who is based in the troubled Northeast, which has not yet shaken off the recession.

A balanced response was given by Jeffrey Brauer of Texas, who said: "Based on our activity level, and the activity of architects and builders I have talked to, it must be true that financing is easier to get."

But he said a bond counsel responsible for securing bonds on most of the public courses in Texas indicated "some bad projects have been financed in the public golf arena and the public sector is still casting a wary eye in the financial community."

RADIO-OPERATED IRRIGATION

Nearly four out of five architects said radio-operated irrigation technology is growing more popular.

But Mike Beebe of McCumber Golf Design noted that people should not understand this to mean they are more popular than computer-controlled systems, which they are not, he said.

Ronald Fream of California warned, "Too much sophistication adds cost and does not always improve results."

And Brauer and John LaFoy of South Carolina said radio-controlled units are more adapted to retrofit situations on existing courses, Brauer adding, "We see little value in specifying them for new construction."

LESS IRRIGATED AREA

In regard to designing courses with less irrigated areas, answers correlated with the areas of the country where an architect is busy.

Many responding in the positive explained "somewhat," or "in some cases."

But, among those responding negatively Bob Lohman of Illinois explained, "No. We are [already] at minimum in the Midwest"; and Tom Marzolf of Fazio Golf Course Designers, Inc. said, "Clients want irrigated turf."

NEW TURFGRASSES

Meanwhile, university and corporate breeding of new turfgrasses are apparently reaping a harvest.

Architects gave a reserved response about specifying new grasses. Most are doing so, but to a limited extent.

"In some cases," said Lester George of Virginia. "For example, I am specifying the use of buffalograss in Texas, where I have ready access to the supplier. We have water consumption concerns and there is less area to irrigate."

LaFoy is specing new varieties for putting surfaces, he said.

Fream said he is concentrating

on drought- and disease-tolerant cultivars as well as those requiring less maintenance.

And Tom Johnson of Washington said, "Yes" but specified: "Varieties of old standards, however."

In many cases, architects, builders, project superintendents — and owners — prefer to wait and let others take any "chances" with new varieties instead of acting as the "pioneers" and committing their own money.

Projects getting underway in Illinois

Three new 18-hole golf course projects are moving forward in Illinois.

An 18-hole championship layout and nine-hole putting course are part of a 2,650-acre planned community scheduled to break ground in Huntley by spring. Prime Group hopes to receive final approval for the 4,690-home golf community sometime in February and to begin construction in March. Bob Lohman is the course architect. The course would be ready for play in early 1997. Corporate offices, parks, retail stores and an outlet mall are also planned as

part of the Prime Group project.

In Elburn, Inland Land Appreciation Fund has presented a conceptual plan to develop a 625-acre golf community in Elburn Village. An 18-hole course surrounded by 1,500 homes is envisioned in the project, according to Inland planner Joe Abel.

The village of Cahokia, meanwhile, is building an 18-hole municipal golf course that could break ground this spring. The project's contractor is Svendsen Builders Inc. and the developer is Fairway Golf Development.

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