

# GOLF COURSE NEWS

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**TAKING A BYTE FROM CONSTRUCTION TIME**  
Architect Brad Benz claims he's speeding up the construction process 30 to 35 percent by using a computer-generated drafting system. The latest example is a British project known as Duke's Dene. For stories, see page 29.

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## USCCA to offer clubs group buying option

By PETER BLAIS

GRAND RAPIDS, Mich. — A recently formed organization designed to cut costs and increase efficiency at private clubs has ruffled a few feathers among other golf associations. The main focus of the United States Country Club Association (USCCA) is a group purchasing program called the Cooperative Alliance for Purchasing (CAP), according to

Jeffrey Dykehouse, USCCA's founder, president and sole stockholder.

CAP reportedly leverages the buying power of USCCA member clubs to provide the best possible price for products and services such as insurance, maintenance equipment and supplies, food and beverage products, office equipment, irrigation materials and equipment, golf

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Jack Nicklaus (from right), Jack II and design associate Chris Cochran survey plans in Palm City, Fla..

## Nicklaus hops aboard the public-access bandwagon

By MARK LESLIE

NORTH PALM BEACH, Fla. — The Nicklaus umbrella is about to expand, adding public-access golf clubs and community development and management to its bulky portfolio.

Keying on a market tailor-made for his name and the fast-growing segment of public golfers, Jack Nicklaus is starting a network of Golden Bear Golf Communities featuring semi-private, daily-fee golf courses.

First out of the gate will

be Golden Bear Golf Club at Laurel Springs, north of metro Atlanta in southern Forsyth County. Ground was broken in April. Watch for future communities in Dallas, Chicago, Detroit, Tampa and Nashville, said Golden Bear Financial Services President Ira Fenton,

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## SPRING START-UP?



Pro-active, mountain maintenance paves way for late spring opening

By MARK LESLIE

KEYSTONE, Colo. — While golf courses elsewhere across the northern tier of the country are taking off green covers and tending to new young turf in April, superintendents like Steve Corneillier at Keystone Ranch Golf Course are snowblowing their greens clear in May.

"The term 'spring start-up' takes on a whole new meaning here," said Corneillier, whose been keeping to this upcountry regimen for decades. "This is springtime in the Rockies at 9,300-foot elevation..."

"When it snows on July 4th weekend we're never sure if we should count that toward last year's snow or next year's," he laughed, although snow did shut down the course for two days on that weekend in 1993.

In his 20 years at Keystone Resort, this has been

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## Sticks & Stones: Firms play the name game

By HAL PHILLIPS

The automobile industry annually spends millions of dollars researching model names that will catch the fancy of consumers. Sometimes the money is well spent; sometimes it may as well have been flushed down the toilet. Who, for example, dreamed up the Ford Probe, a product aimed ostensibly at young women on the move? Unfortunately for Ford, marketing experts believe the name tends to remind young women of pending trips to the gynecologist.

The Probe may be the golf course

superintendents' equivalent to an herbicide called Leech-Rite.

While the dollar value is modest in comparison, suppliers to the golf course industry also spend a great deal of time and money on the formulation of product names. Perhaps because of their sheer number and the often thankless nature of their functions, seed varieties and turf chemicals are tops when it comes to invention. Is it coincidence that so many seed varieties share names with automobiles?

"Mustang, Falcon, Dasher, Fiesta,

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Focus on  
Bermudagrass  
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## The Name Game

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Riviera, Rebel, Nomad, Blazer, Taurus, Avanti, El Dorado, Regal, (La) Sabre, Eclipse, Cutless, Jaguar, Seville," recounted Steve Tubbs, president of Turf Merchants. "In a world of sameness, it's important to be unique. One of the best names ever was a turf-type fine fescue that came out in the early '80s called Houndog [from International Seeds]."

"Everyone laughed at it, but everyone talked about it, too. I wanted to name something, *You ain't nothing but a...* so I could make a blend."

A very unscientific survey of seed and chemical suppliers revealed there is a method to the madness of product introduction. Actually, several methods. Most firms pool the resources of different departments into brainstorming groups, formed specifically to name products. Others come upon them by chance. Others farm the project out to firms specializing in formulating appropriate product names.

"There are even computer programs that spit out page after page of 'appropriate' names," said Gene Hintze, marketing services manager at Sandoz Agro purveyors of Barricade and Sentinel, two names that received high marks from those surveyed. "You can tell a list that's been spit out by a computer because it includes suggestions like *Zarkok*."

Unanimous, however, was the feeling that the most successful names — i.e., those most easily lent to productive advertising campaigns — are those that both describe the product function and harness the imagination of turf managers.

A good example is Shadow, the fine fescue from Turf Seed, designed to thrive in shady areas. The best example may be Bonzi, the growth regulator manufactured by Nirooyal but named by Zeneca. By combining the image of miniature bonsai trees and the aggressive yell of Japanese warriors, Bonzi may be the perfect blend of image and function.

"The absolute best name of all," concluded Jim Petta, head of Turf and Ornamental at Zeneca. "There's no name that fits its use better than Bonzi... My personal favorite is Reward, our contact non-selective herbicide. You can do so many things with that name."

"The problem is, if it's a normal word, nine times out of 10 someone else has the trademark on it. That's what makes it a difficult process. Primo is a great name, and one we tried to get. But Ciba had acquired the rights many years before."

For a potential seed variety name, the equivalent to a trademark search is a trip to the seed regulatory and testing branch of the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) in Beltsville, Md. More than 68,000 variety names, some of them dating back to the 19th century, are kept on file there, according to USDA horti-

culturist Al Burgoon.

"There are so many variety names, so many old ones," said Burgoon, wracking his brain for inventive entries. "Some of the really old names are ridiculous — I can't believe I'm drawing a blank here... Okay: Lazy Wife. That's a pretty good one."

Every company has its own approach to the naming process. In the seed world, for example, Jacklin Seed has been successful with the inventive use of golf terms like Putter. Barenbrug USA uses the "Bar" prefix to create brand equity [Bardot and Baron], while Turf Seed, Inc. President Bill Rose has been

known to name varieties after good employees [Darcy].

Some firms apply method to their madness after the fact.

"People ask us if we named it Sahara because it's so drought tolerant. We tell them, 'No, we just liked the name,'" explained Brenda Dossey, manager, special projects at Farmer's Marketing.

A few years ago, Owen Towne, manager of business development, Turf & Ornamental at Ciba, traveled to San Antonio to observe plots where the firm's new propiconazole product was being tested. He visited the Alamo and learned that "alamo" means cottonwood tree in Spanish. Because

propiconazole has arboreal applications, the rest is history.

"At that point, all we had was a Section 18, a state-use permit," said Towne, then the product manager for Alamo. "So it could only be used in Texas, which meant it fit even better... I think the point is, a good name cannot save a bad product. I don't know if a bad name can sink a good product, but it can certainly hinder its progress."

Seed Research of Oregon, taking no chances on either side of Towne's supposition, names all its varieties according to a letter-number formula. Each bentgrass, for example, is part

of an SR 1000 series; each bluegrass is part of an SR 2000 series; and so on.

"That makes it simple for us, for the consumer and for the universities that test them," explained Skip Lynch, SRO's technical agronomist. "What we're looking for is a very simple, no-questions-asked name that the consumer will automatically associate with our company."

"What really matters is how the product performs. Heck, it's only a name. There's actually a hard fescue out there called Attila [from Turf Merchants]. I'm not sure I want Attila on my golf course."

"What's next? Stalin?"

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**Thomas Bros. Grass**  
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