

GOLF COURSE NEWS

THE NEWSPAPER FOR THE GOLF COURSE INDUSTRY

A UNITED PUBLICATION
VOLUME 8, NUMBER 7
JULY 1996 • \$4.50

INSIDE

Fighting For Funding

Industry lobbies Congress to continue funding NTEP, whose director states his case 10, 15

One-Stop Permitting

Developers, take heed: One-stop permitting is a reality in Maine and parts of California 38

Rejection Rollback

Better cooperation between EPA and chemical manufacturers has resulted in better science 53



FOCUSED ON EXCELLENCE

Randy Waldron, superintendent at the Golf Club of Georgia, is obsessed with consistency and his greens show it. See Super Focus on page 15.

COURSE MAINTENANCE

New ryegrasses put the old models to shame 15
Collar sticks: Uniformity via simplicity 16
Saving money through safety? It's true 17

COURSE DEVELOPMENT

Williamsburg christens another four courses 3
Comment: Everyone needs an irrigation plan 11
Architect Ray Hearn, on his own 36

COURSE MANAGEMENT

TPCs slated for Myrtle Beach? Not so fast 4
Llama caddies: A money-making novelty? 47
New Feature! Man(ager) on the Street 47

SUPPLIER BUSINESS

Novartis assembles management team 53
GCSAA announces changes in show format 54
Bayer realigns sales force; offer fax service 56

Poa triv problems widespread & serious

By MARK LESLIE

Poa trivialis infestations of "epidemic proportions" are being reported in bentgrasses and some Kentucky bluegrasses, affecting golf courses across a broad portion of the United States. The question is, has it always been present?

A rough bluegrass, *poa trivialis* is "very aggressive," said Terry Buchen, The Legends Group director of agronomy. "It will take over bentgrass. Even when the seed is blue tag-certified, it's getting

through [inspections]."

"If you talk to the seed companies, the problem doesn't exist. But if you see new golf courses out in the field, it's absolutely a shame how much *poa trivialis* is there," said Stan Zontek, director of the U.S. Golf Association Green Section's Mid-Atlantic Region. "It's a huge problem. There are some supers who are fit to be tied."

"I totally disagree with Stan and his statement on [new golf courses]," said Dr. Rich Hurley, director of re-

search at Lofts Seed and perhaps the nation's foremost expert on *poa trivialis*. "You take me to 120 old courses and I'll find *poa triv* in fairways, greens and tees. I'm not saying it can't come in the seed, but it's all over. Take me anyplace from Georgia north, coast to coast, blindfolded and I'll find it and I'll find it quick."

"It's a hysteria pointed at the seed companies when, if there is a hysteria, it should be: 'This stuff is everywhere.'"

According to Zontek, the situation

Continued on page 30

OB Sports: Turnkey managers

By PETER BLAIS

PORTLAND, Ore. — Bringing resort golf to urban areas is the goal of O.B. Sports, an Oregon-based, full-service management firm that recently began construction of a new golf project on the western outskirts of this city.

"We're focusing on high-end, public golf," said company President Orrin Vincent. "Country clubs and municipal courses have traditionally been the only choices in Western [U.S.] cities. We want to bring that resort golf experience to the city."

The 36-hole Reserve Vineyards and Golf Club, the fifth facility in the O.B. portfolio, is a good example. The Reserve will operate under an unusual format. Alternating each day, one 18-hole course will be dedicated to public/resort play with the other course reserved for private members and their guests.

The courses, which should open in August

Continued on page 52



The 7th green at Rush Creek Golf Club, a John Fought design located in Maple Grove, Minn. Fought's design firm is now a division of Aurora, Ore.-based OB Sports.



PUBLIC GOLF FORUM

A NATIONAL BUSINESS CONFERENCE AND EXPO FOR SUPERINTENDENTS, OWNERS, MANAGERS, AND DEVELOPERS OF PUBLIC-ACCESS GOLF FACILITIES

OCTOBER • 27 • 29 • 1996

Forum focus: Customer service

By HAL PHILLIPS

CHICAGO — The golfers couldn't be happier. With more than 400 new courses opening their doors each year, there's an increasing variety of playing options. It's another story for the golf course management team, however, as record development numbers mean more competition in an already tight marketplace.

Sophisticated operations that emphasize customer service, manage efficiently, market aggressively and maintain for quality will thrive in this atmosphere, while those content with the *status quo* will fall by the wayside. The application of these sound business principles to public-access course operations will dominate the four-track education conference at The Public Golf Forum, a two-day seminar and trade show sponsored by

Continued on page 41

Participation, rounds back up, says NGF

By HAL PHILLIPS

JUPITER, Fla. — That giant sucking sound you hear is actually a collective sigh of relief. According to the National Golf Foundation's (NGF) annual report on golf participation, rounds played increased 5.5 percent during 1995, pushing the total to 490 million. The report also shows the total number of golfers grew by 3 percent, pegging the current playing population at 25 million.

Following on the heels of last years study which indicated troubling decreases in both rounds and players, the 1996 report comes as welcome news to a golf industry building courses at a record pace. Four hundred and sixty-eight courses, an all-time high, opened for play dur-

Continued on page 62

O.B. Sports names Roberts director

AURORA, Ore. — O.B. Sports has named C.A. Roberts III director of business development. Roberts spent the past six years as director of development for the Atlanta-based American Junior Golf Association.

In his new role, Roberts will promote O.B. Sports on a national basis and

seek new opportunities for growth.

O.B. Sports is a course development, design, and operations company specializing in upscale public/resort facilities in the Western United States. Among its properties are Angel Park in Las Vegas and Langdon Farms in Portland, Ore.



C.A. Roberts

O.B. Sports

Continued from page 1

1997, were designed by former partners Bob Cupp and John Fought. Fought, a U.S. Amateur champion and two-time winner on the PGA Tour, recently merged his design practice with O.B. Sports, giving the company the ability to bring a course from the visionary to the fully operational stage.

"We strive to do the whole thing — design, build and operate a golf facility," Vincent said. "We're not into buying or managing distressed properties like the many consolidators out there. We pre-

fer to start from ground zero and build something, rather than inherit someone else's problems."

O.B. Sports' other properties are Angel Park and The Legacy in Las Vegas, Stevinson Ranch in Modesto, Calif., and Langdon Farms in Portland. Fought designed Langdon Farms and The Reserve. O.B. had construction supervision responsibilities at The Legacy and Stevinson Ranch and the firm has performed some revisions at Angel Park. The company owns Angel Park, Langdon Farms and The Legacy while it manages The Reserve and Stevinson Ranch.

"We'd like to strike a 50-50 bal-

ance between ownership and management contracts," Vincent said.

After a brief fling on the PGA Tour in 1968-69, Vincent and Director of New Operations Bob Marshall (the B in O.B. Sports) founded the firm in 1972. Among the courses the company has been involved with are Edgewood and Incline Village in Lake Tahoe, Calif.; Torrey Pines in San Diego; Teton Pines in Jackson Hole, Wyo.; and Toana Vista Golf Course in Wendover, Md.

In addition to its existing, five-course portfolio, O.B. has another half-dozen projects in various stages of planning. It hopes to officially announce a handful within the next 12 to 18 months.

"We've stuck to our guns about staying near the city in each case," Vincent said. "For example, it's been eight years on the three sites we're working on in Seattle. We could have done projects 60 to 90 minutes outside the city long ago. But that's not the way we want to operate. Staying close to strong demographic areas is important.

"If you are prudent about selecting your market area, there's still room for many more courses to be built. But it's getting so difficult to get permitting, and land costs are so high, that the temptation is to look outside the cities. Those developers are taking a big chance that development will eventually follow them out to those areas. But if it doesn't, they are in big trouble."

O.B. Sports seeks a theme at its courses. Langdon Farms, for instance, carries an agricultural motif throughout the operation. The archway over the entrance resembles that over a Western farm with a sign reading "Public Only." The snack bar is a mock feed store; driving range stalls look like stables; the administration offices are located in a farmhouse. The cart path along the eighth hole passes through a 1918 barn and shots to the green may actually pass over the structure.

The Reserve will feature its own vineyards with a winery theme throughout the property. The chateau-style clubhouse will have a wine-tasting station at the concierge desk promoting The Reserve's own private label.

In addition to bringing resort-type golf to the city, the other thing that distinguishes O.B. Sports from other management firms is its emphasis on golf and the golfer, Vincent said. All of O.B.'s top executives are accomplished players. Vincent and Fought are both former PGA Tour players. Director of Operations Ed Francese, Chief Financial Officer Jamie Cook, Southwest Agronomic Director Ed Hodnett, Northwest Agronomic Director Billy Campbell, investment banker Peter Kooman and Marshall are all low-handicap or scratch players.

"We know what the golfer is looking for," Vincent said. "If a facility doesn't work from a golfing sense, we aren't interested. We won't use housing to subsidize golf."

Pythium Gives You Two Choices.

Pull out your hair.

Prevent it with Banol.



There's one sure way to stop a pythium problem. Banol® Fungicide. Because Banol controls the three forms of pythium in all types of turf. It controls blight as well as crown and root rot in established turf, plus damping-off in newly seeded areas. Banol

can be sprayed when overseeding without harming germinating seedlings. In fact, its performance has been proven to be outstanding as both a preventative and a curative, with no damage to turf. Banol shows no signs of resistance development, either. So don't let ugly, balding patches scalp you. Stop pythium right down to the roots—with Banol.

Banol
FUNGICIDE

Agrevo
A company of Hoechst and NOR-AM