

GOLF COURSE NEWS

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INSIDE

Public Golf Forum

The industry's annual conference focusing on public-access golf scheduled for Chicago in October 3

Consolidation Games

Management firms continue to grow nationwide. See our company chart and special section 43-52



NEW GRASS IN THE WILDERNESS

Assistant superintendent Charlie Riger spreads out PF-11 sprigs on a green at Wilderness Country Club. PF-11 is one of two Bermudagrasses that superintendent Paul Frank has discovered on the Florida course. See Super Focus on page 14.

COURSE MAINTENANCE

Rossi: IPM will expand with knowledge 13
TPC emphasizes safety at Vegas facility 17
'Speed bump' on greens: Life in the fast lane 20

COURSE DEVELOPMENT

Norman's march on Atlanta culminates at TPC 31
Architects society to honor Sarazen 33
Dasher strikes out on his own 40

COURSE MANAGEMENT

Legacy Management seeks owner input 43
Back to Sales School with Prof. Alfonso 44
Vanity fare: Rest rooms change with the times ... 45

SUPPLIER BUSINESS

No soft-pedaling: Spike biz gets complicated 53
What's new in the marketplace? 58-59

Stressed Out!

Superintendents and their turf living too close to the edge, say researchers

By MARK LESLIE

MONTREAL — Declaring that "pre-stress conditioning" will be the new buzz word in turfgrass management, Dr. Joseph DiPaola told Canadian superintendents here they should develop long-term agronomic plans for their golf courses.

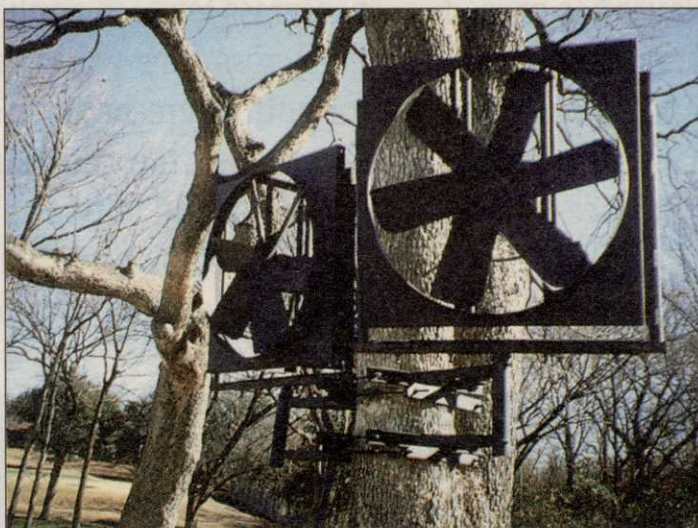
Speaking at the Canadian Golf Superintendents Association's International Turfgrass Conference and Trade Show, DiPaola said: "Our job is very simply to grow tomorrow's turf today. We have to be in a position of putting plants in place for next month, for next summer, well in advance of stress..."

"The heads-up is that we are going to be hearing more about pre-stress conditioning... We don't have all the answers right now. But we've got better answers today than we had five or 10 years ago. We can

Continued on page 24

BIG FANS OF ATMOSPHERIC CIRCULATION

New fan technology continues to improve its effectiveness and utility. See stories, page 13.



Course taking shape atop Montana Superfund site

By MARK LESLIE

ANACONDA, Mont. — It's a legend before its own time, designed by a legend in his own time. Old Works Golf Course won't

open until May 31, yet it has already made its mark: A Superfund cleanup site, which Jack Nicklaus called "one of the ugliest properties I've ever seen," transformed into a golf course that builder Chip Roe lauded as "breathtaking."

The former copper mine closed more than 90 years ago, but left behind a legacy of arsenic over its 250 acres. Turning it from a moonscape-like wasteland into a safe golf course

Continued on page 34

Rolling Greens Photography



QA &A HIGH-PROFILE DEBUT

After considerable ballyhoo, *The Sanctuary*—the first solo project from architect Jim Engh—opens next month in Castle Rock, Colo. Engh spoke with GCN about the project, his career and design philosophies. See page 31.

GolfSouth finds partner and funding source in ClubLink

By HAL PHILLIPS

GREENVILLE, S.C.—To compete for today's course operations contracts, it takes more than for-profit management credentials. It takes deep pockets.

The pockets at GolfSouth LLC just got deeper follow-

ing its alliance with Canada's only publicly owned golf course company, ClubLink. ClubLink and the founders of GolfSouth — N. Barton Tuck, Jr. and Derrell E. Hunter — have agreed the Toronto-based firm will initially fund certain capital for GolfSouth through loans. The pact also gives ClubLink an option to acquire the shares held by Tuck and Hunter in exchange for ClubLink shares.

For ClubLink, which operates six private clubs in Ontario, the alliance means a foothold in the U.S. market. For GolfSouth, it means the ability to compete with the increasing number of management companies which boast built-in funding sources. Among those firms hell-bent on acquisition are Santa Monica, Calif.-based

Continued on page 52



PGA Tour, Deere ink 3-tiered deal

By HAL PHILLIPS

MOLINE, Ill — In a deal that impacts three distinct segments of the golf industry, John Deere has reached an unprecedented nine-year agreement with the PGA Tour to provide turf equipment to the Tournament Players Club (TPC) network of courses, assume title sponsorship of the Quad City Classic and provide 385 acres for a new TPC course development here.

The nine-year partnership — comprising three consecutive 3-year leases — was announced at an April 2 news conference at Deere's world headquarters.

Other golf industry corporations have associated themselves with professional tour events, including The Scott Company's sponsorship of The Tradition,

Continued on page 55

Deere/PGA

Continued from page 1

a Senior PGA Tour stop. However, the Deere deal goes several steps further. Indeed, it's one of the longest sponsorship agreements ever entered into by the PGA Tour.

"It's a fantastic deal," said Clair Peterson, Deere's manager of advertising and promotion for Golf & Turf Products. "Obviously, the Tour was interested in stabilizing the PGA Tour event that's been played in the Quad Cities for 26 years. But it was really a result of both parties meeting objectives. We've been a presenting sponsor of the Quad City Classic for two years. The PGA Tour was looking for a title sponsor. We challenged each other to see what else we could achieve."

Most important to Deere's Golf & Turf Products Division is the maintenance component, which makes the Moline, Ill.-based company the official course equipment supplier to the PGA Tour's 15 owned and operated courses. Lease financing will be provided by John Deere Credit.

"I don't think people know a great deal about leasing equipment," said Peterson. "Our leasing plan allows the TPC courses, as it allows any course, to stay current. With leasing, you no longer have a graveyard of old equipment that has outlived its use. After four years, it becomes very expensive to properly maintain equipment. Leasing really fits in with the industry trend towards containing maintenance costs."

Cal Roth, director of maintenance operations for the PGA Tour's TPC courses, said he sees definite advantages to leasing arrangements like the one outlined in the new agreement. "You're upgrading to new technology," said Roth, "which is changing rapidly. I think that's one of the key advantages. There is also some savings in operational costs if you're managing a fleet on a three-year basis. You're not going to get the larger expenses for repairs."

Roth said TPC golf course maintenance crews have historically used mostly Jacobsen machinery. The new agreement between Deere, the PGA Tour and the Quad City Classic changes that.

"The switch has been a tough part of the transition," said Roth, "from a company we've done business with for a long time, to a new company. They (Deere) have high-quality people and I'm looking forward to working with them. The equipment part of the transaction is a positive aspect. It's a very exciting and significant proposal for both of us."

"It's important to realize," Peterson said, "that this isn't merely a deal for John Deere Golf & Turf. The specific turf equipment aspect is important, but this is a complete corporate commitment. It's Deere agricultural equipment."

It's Deere industrial. It's Deere financial services. It's Deere health care. It's a unique situation that probably wouldn't have happened if we didn't have a PGA Tour event so close to our corporate headquarters."

Come 1999, the Tour event will take place even closer to headquarters — 2 miles, to be precise. The new TPC course, called the TPC at Deere Run, will be located

on land once owned by the Hewitt family, direct descendants of company founder John Deere. The site overlooks the Rock River.

Three-time Quad City champion D.A. Weibring and his firm, Dallas-based Golf Resources, Inc., will design the course. Ground will be broken this spring, using Deere equipment.

"It's going to be instant championship golf," said Maury Miller of

Golf Resources. Golf Resources has worked closely with the Tour design staff in creating the 7,030-yard layout. The front nine will play through rolling pastureland dotted with giant mature oak trees, according to Miller, while the back will wind along bluffs overlooking the river and down to the river. The closing four holes have been set up in the same area overlooking the river. Tournament golfers

will be able to see their opponents playing adjacent holes and hear the roar of the galleries.

"It's as dynamic a site as you're going to find in this area," said Miller. "Anytime you get near a river in the Midwest, the topography gets more dramatic. It's one of those mature sites, with mature trees, some of it right on the banks of the Rock River. It's like

Continued on page 60

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MEANS BUSINESS

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- 17 — *USGA Green Section Regional Seminar in Orlando, Fla.* Contact 908-234-2300.
- 22 — *USGA Green Section Regional Seminar in Nashville, Tenn.* Contact 908-234-2300.
- 30 — *GCSAA Seminar on Turfgrass Ecology in San Diego.* *

May

- 1 — *GCSAA Seminar on Turfgrass Stress Management in San Diego.* *
- 5-7 — *51st Annual Southeastern Turfgrass Conference in Tifton, Ga.* Contact Dr. Wayne Hanna at 912-386-3360.

July

- 29 — *Midwest Regional Turf Field Day in West Lafayette, Ind.* Contact Midwest Regional Turf Foundation at 317-494-8039.

September

- 4-5 — *Southwest Horticultural Trade Show in Phoenix.*

November

- 4-7 — *Turf and Grounds Exposition in Syracuse, N.Y.* Contact 800-873-8873.

1998

January

- 20-22 — *Midwest Turf Expo in Indianapolis.* Contact Bev Bratton at 765-494-8039.

February

- 19-23 — *Club Managers Association of America World Conference in Las Vegas.* Contact Tamara Tyrell at 703-739-9500.

* For more information contact the GCSAA Education Office at 800-472-7878.

Deere/PGA Tour

Continued from page 55

something out of a book."

The new TPC at Deere Run course is scheduled to be finished by fall 1998 and ready for play in 1999 to host the new 1999 John Deere Classic.

"For me, one of the exciting things about this project is, there will be a TPC right here in Moline, in the heart of the Midwest — open to the public," said Peterson. "The other neat thing about this project: We've held annual meetings each summer — we call them 'Feedback Days' — when superintendents come to Moline to evaluate equipment. A local course has been kind enough to make its course available in the past, but now we'll have a place to hold evaluation meetings, test equipment, etc."

Often scheduled opposite marquee events like the Ryder and Presidents cups, the Quad City Classic has existed in relative obscurity for 26 years. The Deere agreement — with its high-profile sponsorship and new tournament site — should transform the event. The Quad City has also switched places with the Anheuser-Busch tournament at Kingsmill, netting the Deere event a prime July spot following the Western Open.

Golf Course Marketplace

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