

GOLF COURSE NEWS

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NEW PARTNERS

Architect Dr. Michael Hurdzan (right) has asked long-time associate Dana Fry to join him in his growing Columbus, Ohio, practice. For story, see page 44.

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Fearis joins GCSAA order of ascension

By PETER BLAIS

LAS VEGAS — Blue Hills Country Club's David Fearis, 50, was elected GCSAA secretary/treasurer at the recent annual board of directors election here, meaning the Kansas City (Mo.) superintendent will eventually succeed new President Paul McGinnis and Vice President George Renault as leader of the national superintendents' organization.

The membership also voted in favor of a \$40 dues increase to \$250 for head superintendents (\$125 for assistants), but rejected a proposed bylaw amendment that would have created a new classification (C-V) for career assistant superintendents who would receive the right to vote at annual elections.

Fearis, a 29-year GCSAA member who has served on the board since 1993, bested R. Scott Woodhead,



Dave Fearis

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Palmer Mgmt. moves toward franchising

By PETER BLAIS

ORLANDO, Fla. — Arnold Palmer Golf Management Co. has unveiled a franchise program that allows course owners to use the Palmer name and proprietary operating systems, but permits course owners to continue operating their golf facilities themselves.

"No one has provided management services to people who want to continue running their own courses, until now," said Palmer Chief Marketing Officer Joseph Redling. "We created this system specifically for them."

In exchange for an undisclosed annual franchise

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Wetlands rulings send mixed signals

Had ground been broken today on Gary Player's Floridian in Stuart, Fla., the project would be subject to far stricter wetlands permitting.

Policy-makers hold key to development

By MARK LESLIE

WASHINGTON, D.C. — The country's hotly debated wetlands policies are in turmoil following contradictory developments issued in the early days of 1997: First, Nation Wide Permits for wetlands were tightened, then a court ruling weakened regulations limiting excavation of marshes and swamps.

According to experts, this upheaval may continue for the next two years, until the federal Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and Army Corps of Engineers install a new set of Nation Wide Permits (NWPs). Golf course developers and oth-

ers are now dealing with two major changes:

- A revised NWP 26 [*GCN*, January '97], which reduces the number of acres a project can affect. In the past, a developer could impact 1 to 10 acres of isolated wetlands or stream headwaters. One acre could be affected without seeking permits. Under the new rules, permits are required for any impact of more than 1/3 of an acre. The 10-acre maximum of wetlands that could be affected has been cut to 3 acres.

- U.S. District Court Judge Stanley S. Harris, who ruled here on Jan. 23, has thrown out the "Tulloch

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DELICATE WORK AT GLEN DORNOCH

Architect Clyde Johnston has unveiled the newest addition to South Carolina's Grand Strand. At Glen Dornoch Waterway Golf Links, now open for play in Little River, Johnston employed 26,000 feet of silt fence to secure the surrounding wetlands and waterfronts from construction activities. For the story on this and other Johnston projects, see page 49.

Factory stores meet market-specific needs

By HAL PHILLIPS

DALLAS — Factory stores here in the competitive Texas golf course market have shown how much distribution has changed, while simultaneously re-emphasizing the importance of independent distribution to the selling process.

Citing loss of market share, The Bloomington, Minn.-based Toro Co. has opened three factory stores serving the Dallas-Fort Worth, Houston and San Antonio markets. One of Toro's major competitors — Racine, Wis.-based Jacobsen Division of Textron — has also opened a factory store here in Dallas.

Yet executives at both firms are careful to point out that market-specific factors — not a loss of faith in traditional distribution channels — have prompted creation of these factory stores.

"This is not a trend," said Eddie Clark, who manages Professional Turf Products, Toro's three-pronged Texas distribution operation. "Toro's expertise is manufacturing and marketing. Distribution is the facilitator that Toro uses to take its products to market. We had lost quite a bit of market share here, so we decided we had to make a transition."

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New officers take their places at helm

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41, of Valley View Country Club in Bozeman, Mont., for the secretary/treasurer post. If tradition holds, Fearis will become GCSAA president in 1999.

He will be preceded this year by McGinnis, 45, and in 1998 by Renault, 48, both of whom ran unopposed for president and vice president, respectively.

McGinnis, 45, is head superintendent at Moon Valley Country Club in Peoria, Ariz. A 19-year GCSAA member who was first elected to the GCSAA Board of Directors in 1992, McGinnis characterized himself as "a bridge" between the somewhat controversial boards and administrative staff of the early 1990s and the current board, which has emphasized cooperation between regional chapters and national headquarters.

Renault is head superintendent at Burning Tree Club in Bethesda, Md. He is a 19-year GCSAA member who was originally elected to the board in 1993. One of the more important positions he has held is as a member of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Golf Advisory Commission, which is drafting recommendations that will help the federal government decide how golf courses can meet ADA requirements.

Also re-elected to the board were incumbents Tommy Witt of Wynstone Golf Club in North Barrington, Ill.; Michael Wallace of Hop Meadow Country Club in Simsbury, Conn.; and Samuel Snyder of Hercules Country Club in Wilmington, Del. The other candidate for the board was John Maddern of Elk Ridge Golf Course in Atlanta, Mich.

The recently elected officers and board



Paul McGinnis

members will join returning directors Woodhead, Bruce Williams (immediate past president) and Ken Mangum.

•••

The defeated membership diversification bylaw amendment mentioned earlier would have created a new optional C-V class for assistant superintendents. It would have allowed assistant superintendents with at least three

years experience virtually the same privileges as Class A and B head superintendents, including the right to vote at annual elections, but not the right to hold office. Those assistants choosing class C-V status would have been required to pay the same dues as head superintendents.

Under the proposal, assistants with three years or more of experience would have had the option of remaining Class C members, paying half dues without the right to vote. The amendment was defeated by just 76 votes, 3,063-2,987.



George Renault

In addition to overwhelmingly approving a dues increase from \$210 (\$105 for assistants) to \$250 (\$125 for assistants), the membership voted in favor of an amendment requiring all Class A and B superintendent applicants joining the national organization after July 1, 1997 to also be a member of an affiliated chapter.

Members also passed a third amendment redefining the Class AA membership for retired members and waiving any membership dues for that group.



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McLaughlin Group

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regulations promote an anti-competitive situation. Our industry is undergoing consolidations and mergers in response to some of these regulations. The little guys with good ideas simply can't play the game because the regulations make it too expensive."

Clift and Richards addressed the ongoing debate over the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act. Specific regulations regarding how golf courses will have to be designed to accommodate those with disabilities are still being developed.

"The idea that the disabled are fully a part of society is a relatively new one," Clift said. "But 12 percent of the population is disabled and as the population ages, we'll have to accommodate those people as well. There's a market there and money to be made."

Richards had a slightly different spin on the situation, noting that it may take another two years to finalize ADA regulations regarding golf courses.

"Consultants are covering themselves by a factor of five to avoid getting sued later on," Richards said. "They are recommending we do more than the law will likely ever require us to do. We're being subjected to laws that aren't even written yet."

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