

# GOLF COURSE NEWS

THE NEWSPAPER FOR THE GOLF COURSE INDUSTRY

A UNITED PUBLICATION  
VOLUME 9, NUMBER 3  
MARCH 1997 • \$5.50

INSIDE

## Mission Accomplished, Again

Survey says: Mission Hills has repeated as the Best Maintained Course on the LPGA Tour ..... 13

## GCSAA Show Review

Missed the big show in Las Vegas? Fear not. *GCN* provides complete coverage ..... 31-39



### 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.

### COURSE MAINTENANCE

Pinehurst No. 2 and its new greens are ready ..... 3  
Going from Bermuda to bent just got easier ..... 13  
Special Mower Section: Silence is golden ..... 27-30

### COURSE DEVELOPMENT

Marsh teams with HNTB, opens U.S. office ..... 43  
Forse gets a crack at Wilson's Pine Tree ..... 49  
Farmers-turned-developers in the heartland ..... 70

### COURSE MANAGEMENT

Muni course operators: Good news from IRS ..... 9  
Matrix looks to foster public-private hybrids ..... 53  
Schmidt takes convoluted path to success ..... 56

### SUPPLIER BUSINESS

Zeneca & its distributors roll out Heritage ..... 59  
Midwest Rake acquires Accuform rights ..... 61  
A massive post-GCSAA product showcase ..... 65-68

## 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

Continued on page 39

## 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

Continued on page 58



## 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

Continued on page 52



### 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."

Continued on page 62

## Wetland rulings

Continued from page 1

rule," which was adopted in 1993 to prevent developers from digging ditches and draining wetlands. Harris said the Corps of Engineers and EPA had exceeded their authority in adopting regulations that he said far exceeded the original intent of Congress. He declared that Congressional action — not unilateral bureaucratic rulings — needs to be taken to correct anything the

agencies feel is imperfect.

Jon Canon, general counsel to the EPA, wrote a letter in mid-February to the Department of Justice, asking the solicitor general to request a stay on Harris' decision and asking that the government seek an appeal of that decision in appellate court.

Dismantling the Tulloch rule was hailed by developers including National Homebuilders Association Vice President Michael Luzier, who told the *Washington Post*: "We were not skirting the

law. It was the government that was violating the law."

Mike Kelly, vice president of Williamsburg (Va.) Environmental Group, Inc., which works on many golf projects, cautioned the golf industry about diving into drainage projects and losing ground it has gained in its continuous move toward environmental awareness. While the Tulloch rule involved a North Carolina businessman who wanted to drain wetlands for a golf resort, Kelly said golf developers

"have gone so far to prove they do things in an environmentally sensitive manner, that to go out and drain wetlands when it can be avoided is counterproductive."

Saying developers need to take their ultimate goal into consideration, he added: "You may have areas that are jurisdictional wetlands that are not attractive, in which case this might allow you to improve them, or beautify them, whereas before you could not touch them. The golf industry was able to work with the envi-

ronmental issues and wetlands. It still needs to incorporate prudent planning out front. In a nutshell it needs to be aware of it but responsible at the same time."

While the judge's ruling may open the way for some projects to go forward more easily, developers are fearful the NWP modifications could extensively deter and delay developments. Dr. Stuart Cohen, president of Environmental & Turf Services, Inc. in Wheaton, Md., predicted the NWP 26 change could affect 10 percent of golf projects. Kelly guessed at 15 to 20 percent.

Greg Peck, EPA's branch chief in the Wetlands Division for Wetlands and Aquatic Resources, disagreed, citing a figure of 8 percent or less.

"About 10 percent of the 35,000 activities we authorized in 1996 were occurring on over 3 acres, but 65 percent of the impacts were occurring in that 10 percent of activities," Peck said. "So, you can see, there was a compelling argument for us to continue to authorize projects but reduce the larger impacts. We can authorize 90 percent of activities but reduce impacts by 65 percent."

Peck also assuaged concerns that the Corps of Engineers would now evaluate the impacts of a project cumulatively, rather than separately — a change that could overshadow all others.

In the past, a developer could obtain road and utility crossings in different NWPs. For instance, NWP 14 would allow a certain acreage for cart crossings and that land would not be included in the NWP 26 calculation.

Kelly said a change to this regulation could have "a significant impact," pushing a project "over the 3-acre threshold pretty quickly." Peck said developers will still be allowed to "stack" NWPs — they just have to notify the Corps beforehand.

Anticipated long delays in permitting is another fear of developers that Peck tried to squelch.

"I think we've made a lot of progress reducing permit time," he said. "Our estimate is there will be 500 new permit applications because of these changes. That's divided by 40 districts nationwide."

He said the dismantling of NWP 26 will not have a major impact because there are 39 other NWPs, and "many of the activities allowed under 26 are authorized under those other permits NWPs, or by regional permits."

While NWP 26 expires in two years, EPA intends to implement a new system before then.

The agency expects a proposal in the Federal Register for public review and comment within 12 months, and have the program operative within 18 months.

"We can actually continue to reduce the regulatory burden of this program but provide for appropriate environmental protection — if we focus these NWPs correctly," Peck said.

# RegalCrown™

## "The Plant Growth Stimulator"

Develop a turfgrass root system that grows deeper and is more dense for your golf course with RegalCrown®. Healthy growing turfgrass requires a root mass that can endure the stress of hot summer weather and winter desiccation with the added pressure of turf traffic.

RegalCrown® provides excellent root development to minimize turfgrass stress and pressure. The result is healthy, fine quality turfgrass.



*"For the lion's share of quality turfgrass"*

REGAL CHEMICAL COMPANY / P.O. BOX 900 / ALPHARETTA, GA 30239 / 1-800-621-5208

CIRCLE #140



GOLF COURSE NEWS