

The kids are alright

Come on, don't tell me you didn't get massive chills up your spine when you saw that kid Justin Rose chip in for birdie at 18 at the British Open. A fairy-tale week with a fairy-tale ending for the 17 year-old — and, I predict, the beginning of a youth golf-boom in the U.K.

There has never, ever been a better time to be in this business.

The great play and great smiles of these blushing "new pros" have energized the game on every level. Last year we had that shot of the legions of kids following Tiger down the fairway at Augusta. This year we had the shot of the kids running behind Rose's cart as it made its way to the first tee of his final round. At every turn the kid was bombed with applause, behind each gallery rope young faces beamed as he strolled by, every eye taking in his uncomfortable, teenage awkwardness.

Yet Rose never folded.

The golf industry is turning a corner and we're gonna have these kids — the ones on the fairways and the ones in the gallery — to thank.

Last year we were bewildered at how an industry that wasn't gaining any new customers could continue to add facilities at record numbers. When the new National Golf Foundation (NGF) numbers hit the streets we finally saw some positive movement — the industry let out a collective sigh. We can breathe a little easier when we think of the fate of those more than 900 courses that are going to open in the next two years.

Go on, that's OK. You can think I'm just adding fuel to yet another media bonfire. But I'm not going to let this issue go. These kids are inspiring kids. Golf has been waiting a decade for this spark and we're going to hammer away at it in news and editorials.

As a matter of fact, our newest section, Reaching Out, will be covering the breaking news of The First Tee, Hook-a-Kid On Golf and other nationwide and worldwide initiatives designed to aid the development of affordable, accessible public golf for kids and everyone who wants to participate.

I'm stepping on a plane for England in four days. I can't wait to see the media circus surrounding Rose, his turning pro and his debut at the Dutch Open.

The industry should be letting out a collective smile.

By the way, cut out the little box to the left and add it to your Rolodex. Any time you have news with an international slant, forward it to Trevor Ledger, *Golf Course News*' international bureau chief.



Michael Levans,
editor

How green are these greens?!

OK, class, here's the question: Does producing *Audubon Magazine* cause more impact on the environment than Augusta National Golf Club?

Now, don't all answer at once and don't leap to a conclusion. You could be wrong. Scrutinize the facts, get an indication, and then venture an answer.

Of course, you've done your reading and you all know that *Audubon Magazine's* July-August edition contained a feature story, "The Greening of America," about golf courses and the environment. And you know it states on the front page of the story: "More than 700 new golf courses will open this year, paving this country with manicured grasses. The question is: How green are these greens?"

(Aside No. 1: If you can get by the use of "paving" and the glaring mistake forecasting 700 courses, please tell me what they mean by "How green are these greens?")

(Aside No. 2: I must say that despite a number of factual errors, this article sheds a far fairer light on golf than one might expect from such a nemesis of past distortions.)

To the point of my original question, the article does pick on Augusta National Golf Club. A sidebar categorizes courses as The Good, The Bad and The Formerly Ugly. Collier's Reserve in Naples, Fla., Old Westbury (N.Y.) Golf and Country Club and Widow's Walk Golf Course (GC) in Scituate, Mass., are numbered as The Good because they are so friendly to the wildlife and environment.

Bay Harbor (Mich.) GC, Coyote Hills GC in Fullerton, Calif., and Old Works GC in Anaconda, Mont., are named the Formerly Ugly because they reclaimed ugly land.

The Bad? The author selected the spectacularly manicured and much-maligned Augusta National; Shadow Creek Golf Club in North Las Vegas, which uses 1 million gallons of water a day; and Golf Club of Miami, which suffered a major fish kill a few years ago when an unexpected heavy rainfall followed a Nemicur application.

So, I ask again: Does producing *Audubon Magazine* cause more impact on the environment than Augusta National Golf Club?

Before answering, let's consider the environmental impact of producing *Audubon Magazine*, which in March-April contains 122 pages produced on high-gloss paper and sent to 453,750 paid subscribers in North America.

• Paper source. Paper, of course, comes from trees. Gasoline and oil, among other things, were consumed to cut the trees and transport them to the paper mill. At the paper mill, various chemicals and water were used to transform the pulp into paper, and electrical power was used to operate the machinery. Was that power generated by a nuclear or coal-generated facility, or from the more environmentally friendly hydro plant?

Continued on page 50



Mark Leslie,
managing editor

GOLF COURSE NEWS

THE NEWSPAPER FOR THE GOLF COURSE INDUSTRY

Publisher
Charles E. von Brecht

Editorial Director
Brook Taliaferro

Editor
Michael Levans

Managing Editor
Mark A. Leslie

Associate Editor
Peter Blais

International Bureau Chief
Trevor Ledger

Contributing Editor
Terry Buchen, CGCS, MG

Production Manager
Joline Gilman

Traffic Manager
Candice Russell

Editorial Advisory Board
Raymond Davies, CGCS

CourseCo
Kevin Downing, CGCS
Willoughby Golf Club
Tim Hiers, CGCS
Collier's Reserve
Ted Horton

The Pebble Beach Co.
Dr. Michael Hurdzan
Hurdzan Design Group
Mary P. Knaggs

Bass Rocks Golf Club
James McLoughlin
The McLoughlin Group
Kevin Ross, CGCS
Country Club of the Rockies
Brent Wadsworth
Wadsworth Construction

Editorial Office
Golf Course News
Box 997, 106 Lafayette Street
Yarmouth, ME 04096
207-846-0600; Fax: 207-846-0657
mlevans@golfcoursenews.com
mleslie@golfcoursenews.com

ADVERTISING OFFICES
National Sales:
Charles E. von Brecht
Box 997, 106 Lafayette Street
Yarmouth, ME 04096
207-846-0600; Fax: 207-846-0657
cvonb@golfcoursenews.com

Western Sales:
Robert Sanner
Western Territory Manager
2141 Vermont
Lawrence, KS 66046
785-842-3969; fax: 785-842-4304

Account Manager
Jean Andrews
P.O. Box 51
Fryburg, Maine 04093
Phone/FAX 207-925-1099

Marketplace Sales:
Jean Andrews
Phone/FAX 207-925-1099

Public Golf Forum Sales
Dean DeLuca
207-846-0600; fax: 207-846-0657

Subscription Information
Golf Course News, P.O. Box 3047
Langhorne, PA 19047
215-788-7112

United Publications, Inc.
Publishers of specialized business and consumer magazines.
Chairman
Theodore E. Gordon
President
J.G. Taliaferro, Jr.



Copyright © 1998 by United Publications, Inc. All rights reserved and reproduction, in whole or in part, without written permission from the publisher is expressly prohibited.

GOLF COURSE NEWS

GUEST COMMENTARY: PUBLIC GOLF AROUND THE WORLD

Public golf in Germany: Time for the doors to open

By THOMAS ADKISSON

As more and more Germans are getting a taste for this great game of golf, either on holiday or through watching a certain Mr. Woods blast a 360-yard drive, their desire to play continues to grow.

To many "would be" golfer, the opportunity to experience golf here in Germany is limited due to an underdeveloped public golf infrastructure and the traditional club-membership mentality. A crucial link is missing for the continued growth of the industry.

Of the 580 or so golf facilities in Germany today, only 30 are public with a further 120 being partially open to all. Unlike the United States or the United Kingdom, where municipal courses are woven into common society, golf in Germany evolved as an exclusive sport and, for the most part, remains reserved for members of private clubs.

Holiday destinations such as Spain and Portugal have embraced open-access courses in promoting tourism and increased revenues whereas German tourist towns have been slow to appreciate the value of offering golf to their visitors.

Golf in Germany can not expand with the confines of the private golf club.

There is a distinct need for better access to golf facilities which are both convenient and financially viable for the prospective player. Furthermore the golf industry in Germany must be viewed from a business standpoint: creating investment opportunities at the same time as opening the sport to a wider public.

Today public golf is forcing fundamental changes to how golf in Germany is perceived. Many private golf clubs are now experiencing a slowdown in new members. As a result of the insufficient number of public facilities, potential new members do not have the opportunity to hone their skill and confirm their interest in golf before making the substantial financial commitment of joining a golf club.

Many new golf developments, along with redesigns at existing courses, are now incorporating public facilities and/or access to the driving range and practice greens. A good many of the public courses are integrated with an 18-hole private course. One good example of this arrangement is the Golf Course Schönbuch near Stuttgart, which recently expanded from 18 to 27 holes, 9 of which are public. This dual function generates increased income while providing the structure for seeding future club members.

Time required to play golf is another burden inherent in encouraging new golfers, especially in our "time is money" society. Execu-

Continued on page 50



Thomas Adkisson has been involved in German golf architecture as a freelance landscape architect since 1995 developing public golf facilities. Before Germany, he worked in San Francisco for Guzzardo & Associates designing communities in co-operation with Robert Trent Jones II. Since moving to Germany, Adkisson has worked with Harradine Golf GmbH and Weishaupt Golf Design creating courses.

ProStar 70WP contains 40% more active ingredient

AgrEvo has announced that its new formulation ProStar 70WP Fungicide Contains 40 percent more active ingredient than its original ProStar 50WP formulation. According to George Raymond, Marketing Manager, AgrEvo Green Industry, the higher concentration of active ingredient in ProStar 70WP results in the need for less product to achieve the same effective control and smaller-sized packaging.

Additionally, Raymond said, ProStar 70WP Fungicide contains 38 percent less carrier and more wetting agents and dispersants, which enhance fungicide distribution and ease of use.

The company said that these properties make ProStar 70WP easier to mix and handle, with the same effectiveness at use rates as low as 1.5 ounces per 1000 square feet. For more information, contact 302-892-3000.

CIRCLE #201

Biobarrier ready with Root Control

Biobarrier's new Root Control System prevents roots from damaging hardscapes and landscapes by re-directing their growth. Installed between tree roots and the area to be protected.

Biobarrier is a geotextile landscape fabric with permanently embedded nodules. Biobarrier will fit the contours of the site and can be used along a sidewalk to maximize the soil space available for roots. For more information, contact 615-847-7000.

CIRCLE #202

ELMCO adds Royal Ride

ELMCO's new Royal Ride Sport LE Commercial Golf Cart is the industry's first commercial luxury golf cart. The Royal Ride Sport comes with either a 48-volt electric or 9 horsepower, 4-cycle gas power system. The luxury features on the Royal Ride include a hinged windshield, dual headlights and plenty of space in its built-in cooler/storage area for golf equipment. It's mounted on the all-aluminum Club Car chassis and has triple re-enforced body panels. For more information, contact 800-749-3533.

CIRCLE #203

GUEST COMMENTARY: PUBLIC ACCESS AROUND THE WORLD

Germany

Continued from page 10

Executive courses are popping up around many of the larger cities in Germany, employing the philosophy of convenience and access.

The land required for a conventional 18-hole course necessarily pushes the clubs further away from cities and Autobahn connections. Given that it takes, on average, 1 hour to travel to the course followed by, say, 5 hours playing time, a round of golf takes up the greater portion of an entire day.

Whereas, a centrally located executive course with good traffic connections cuts traveling time in half and then one is not

obligated to 18 holes. Instead it could be a bucket of balls with the possibility of 6 holes in order to catch a little exercise after work and still be home in time for dinner.

There is a beautifully designed 6-hole executive course with driving range near Dortmund called Golfen in Herdecke: this business venture has recently opened and provides a wide-ranging clientele with the opportunity to try golf, practice and simply enjoy the game.

High quality is the benchmark in the German golf market with companies such as Paragon of London having developed wonderful facilities in association with horse racing tracks using

the otherwise useless land in the middle of the circuit for golf.

These executive courses are filling a lucrative niche as both business opportunities and accessible, convenient golf facilities for a broader and eager public.

In the highly competitive tourist industry a wide spectrum of attractions is key to success. Many of the mineral bath resorts throughout Germany are now expanding to include golf in their leisure armoury. The traditional perception of the Spas is one of passive and inactive leisure. The modern visitor is demanding active involvement in their leisure break, with exercise and beautiful environment being prerequisite.

Golf sits snugly in this scenario.

Resort hotels, complete with golf academies are offering package deals which introduce guests to the sport or allow the more experienced players to improve their golf under the tutelage of highly qualified instructors.

Again the benefits are twofold — the exposure of golf to new players along with playing opportunities for non club members. As the economics of supply and demand continue to determine the future of the golf industry in Germany, further development of public golf facilities is imperative.

Access is essential in fostering a growing market. Public golf is evolving in a different manner to the traditional municipal golf courses, but the net result is much the same — bringing this wonderful sport to the enjoyment of everyone while making a little money along the way.

For further information on Public Golf in Germany contact Thomas Adkisson, Freier Landschaftsarchitekt, Heinrich-Wieland-Allee 60b, 75177 Pforzheim, Germany. Tel: 0049-7231-140 050.

Leslie comment

Continued from page 10

• The ink. Probably it is soy-based. Farmers use pesticides to produce soy beans, right? Certainly more was used per soybean plant than Augusta National uses on its grass (read on and learn).

• The press. Think of all the energy that was used to run the presses. Again, was it coal-, nuclear-, or water-generated?

• Circulation. Transportation by truck, train or airplane uses gasoline, oil and various other resources.

• Feel free, bright students, to add to this list of environmental impacts.

Perhaps *Audubon Magazine* and Augusta National are on more even terms than people would think, eh?

But what is Augusta National's defense against claims, including one from a golf industry magazine editor, that they use "lots of pesticides"?

Club officials feel they are very environment-friendly.

First, Augusta National is closed five months a year, from mid-May to mid-October, during which time the course is maintained but not at tournament levels.

Second, to a great degree they use environment-friendly or no chemicals, for instance treating mole crickets with soapy water and ants with hot water.

Third, the very wealth of the club allows it to perform some functions in a better way than "average" courses. A weather radar system helps prevent pesticide applications when it is going to rain. The club has the manpower and equipment to do a lot of spot-spraying. Computer analysis is run on agronomic problems to identify a disease and determine how to treat it. And the maintenance crews recycle water and engine oil and have a special wash rack for golf carts.



Marsh Benson, who oversees the entire property, and golf course superintendent Brad Owen know they are under a global microscope for this most-watched television golf event. Thus they are extra cautious.

Now, would you like to answer the question: Does producing *Audubon Magazine* cause more impact on the environment than Augusta National Golf Club?

Armed with that answer, should we ask *Audubon Magazine* to cease publication?

...

Audubon Magazine contains an interesting disclaimer in tiny type in the masthead that declares: "The observations and opinions expressed in *Audubon Magazine* are those of the respective authors and should not be interpreted as representing the official views of the National Audubon Society."

Most of the known world of newspapers and magazines in democratic countries at least say they try to handle news in an unbiased manner. This is the first one I recall reading that acknowledges its contributing writers editorialize.

...

Audubon International President Ron Dodson, whose Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary System for Golf Courses drew some praise in the *Audubon Magazine* article, defended the construction and maintenance of golf facilities.

"Is it possible to build a golf course and destroy habitat? Of course," he said. "But, personally, I've never been to a proposed golf course site that wasn't already decimated by or, at the very best, impacted by past human activity. It's either second- or third-growth forest, or an old pasture, or landfill. Yes, there is wildlife on it, but I'm telling you: Most of the golf courses being built that have to do an environmental impact statement, if they do continuous monitoring they find out that there are more species of wildlife on those courses after they build them than before they built them."

Dodson even said that when society has decided to develop a desert area, with all its pavement, houses and effluent water, the addition of a golf course can be a plus.

"From a wildlife point of view, a desert is an important ecosystem. There are a lot of reptiles and certain birds and sometimes endemic species of flowers and [nocturnal flying mammals] like bats. So there are a lot of reasons, from a biological point of view, that you do not want to disrupt the desert," he said.

With that said, and when the land is already being developed, "If they can build a course and keep the desert ecology functioning, you'll increase biodiversity."

FLORIDA TURFGRASS ASSOCIATION, INC.

presents



September 16-19, 1998
Tampa Convention Center
Tampa Florida

Exhibit space available
call 800-882-6721

CIRCLE #142