

GOLF COURSE NEWS

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INSIDE

Public Golf Forum Preview

If you're on the fence about attending this year's Forum, take a look at who'll be on hand 39-41

Spotlight on Asia: Malaysia

Overbeck visits Kelab Golf Seri Selangor Public Golf Course, Malaysia's first public track 13

Crisis in Canada puts clamps on course spending

By PETER BLAIS

TORONTO — The cry of the Loony — as Canadians call their one-dollar, bird-imprinted coin — has been a mournful sound for superintendents and suppliers of U.S.-manufactured course equipment as the plummeting Canadian dollar has made those items increasingly expensive for Canadian course managers.

By early August, the Canadian dollar had fallen to a record low, an equivalent of approximately 65 cents in U.S. currency. That represented a 15-percent decline from a year earlier and was forcing some superintendents to consider cutting back, or at the very least

Continued on page 49



Maybe a first: Gary Player, Tom Fazio, Pete Dye, Arnold Palmer and Jack Nicklaus all in one room at the same time for the project announcement in Palm Beach Gardens.

Developmental tidal wave hits Palm Beach Gardens, Fla.

By PETER BLAIS

PALM BEACH GARDENS, Fla. — Three major golf projects located within 15 minutes of one another are in the works in this southeast Florida community that is already home to many upscale private and public facilities.

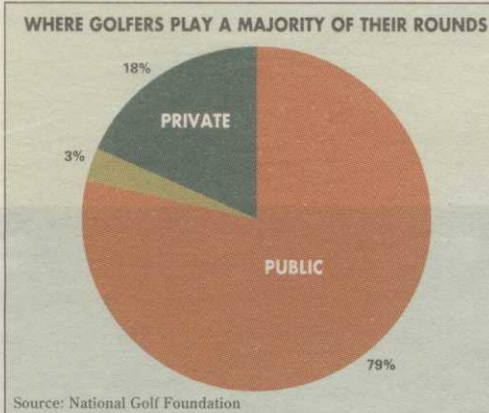
A Catholic priest, who wants to pair a golf course with a treatment center for troubled teens, hopes to close on a 500-acre parcel for the facility here this fall; *Golf Digest* magazine plans to build a home for its golf schools and a venue to entertain corporate cli-

ents; and Jack Nicklaus is designing what many people are calling his legacy near his South Florida home.

Father Leo Armbrust, who is the team chaplain for the NFL's Miami Dolphins and the Big East Miami Hurricanes football teams, is negotiating with the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation to purchase the property, where he plans to build Renaissance Village.

Armbrust hopes to build a private course co-designed by Jack

Continued on page 34



PUBLIC GOLF NUMBERS REMAIN STRONG

Twelve years ago, private golfers made up 20 percent of the golf population. By 1997, that percentage had dropped to just above 18 percent. Since 1986 public golfers grew by over 39 percent, from 15 million to 21 million in 1997.

COURSE MAINTENANCE

- Water study exonerates fungicides 17
- Greenskeeping and the '2' Rule 23
- Cottonwoods perfects soil, fertilizer storage 25

COURSE DESIGN & DEVELOPMENT

- Golfing the Big Apple's main street 3
- Great British Open holes come to Vegas 27
- Andrews AFB first base to reach 54 holes 33

COURSE MANAGEMENT

- Boyne hits greens and slopes 43
- Meadowbrook adds a pair 44
- OB Sports expands to Seattle 46

SUPPLIER BUSINESS

- Flowtronex pumps up local service 47
- Rain Bird gets into the giving way 47
- Lebanon to market *isobutylidene diurea* 12

The British are coming

By TREVOR LEDGER & MARK LESLIE

Over 100 years ago the "fathers" of golf course design boarded steam packets and headed west over the Atlantic Ocean to share the "gospel" according to St. Andrews.

Now, following 60 years of one-way eastbound traffic (with the odd exception bucking the trend), a trickle of British design evangelists is lighting the fires of revival. Saddle your horse,

Continued on page 36

Public Golf Forum Maintenance Track: Long-sought solutions unveiled

By MARK LESLIE

PALM SPRINGS, Calif. — From unveiling the long-sought solution to *poa annua* and the initial results of the country's first "environmental test course," to illustrating the best practices for everyday operations, the upcoming Public Golf Forum promises practical help in its conference Maintenance sessions.

To be held at Rancho Las Palmas Marriott Resort here, Oct. 26-27, the *Golf*

Course News-sponsored national conference and expo is geared toward superintendents, general managers, owners and developers of public-access golf facilities.

Following keynote addresses by Dr. Michael Hurdzan on Monday and PGA Tour star Greg Norman on Tuesday, each

Continued on page 41



HURDZAN/FRY: LIKE A ROLLING STONE

Heavy machinery is dwarfed by the boulder work at Olde Stonewall Golf Club outside Pittsburgh. The clubhouse and maintenance building bring the British countryside to mind. See story page 27.

PGF: Maintenance Track preview

Continued from page 1

day will be full of talks from some of the country's best-known superintendents and agronomic experts. Among them, Michigan State University's Dr. Joe Vargas; Golf Course Superintendents Association of America (GCSAA) Past President Bruce Williams, CGCS, of Los Angeles Country Club; Pebble Beach Co. Vice President of Resource Management Ted Horton, CGCS; agronomic consultants Terry Buchen, Master Greenkeeper and CGCS, and Dave Wilber, CGCS; and Widow's Walk Golf Course superintendent Jeff Carlson, CGCS.

Vargas and EcoSoil, Inc. Vice President of Product Development John Doyle will address what for many decades has been the single most frustrating obstacle for many superintendents: killing *poa annua*.

For many, *poa annua* is an invasive weed. Now, it appears, the solution has arrived via research efforts led by Vargas, combined with the technology of EcoSoil's BioJect System, which grows bacteria and delivers it through the irrigation system to the golf course.

A professor of botany and plant pathology at Michigan State, Vargas in 1997 was awarded the Distinguished Service Award by the GCSAA. He developed the first mathematical prediction model for turfgrass disease, discovered the first bacterial disease in turf on Toronto creeping bentgrass, helped develop the first biological control for annual bluegrass and created a fungicide timing model for summer patch.

The golf world has been waiting since the spring of 1997 for the results of the many studies being performed on Widow's Walk Golf Course in Scituate, Mass., the nation's first environmental demonstration golf facility. They will be disclosed by Carlson, who now has a year and a half, including one full season, under his belt of managing the course.

The 18-hole Widow's Walk was built as a working laboratory to discover the impact of a golf course on wetlands, wildlife and habitat. Using three different greens types and three different root-zone mixes in each type, Widow's Walk is anticipated as a wealth of information for environmentalists, scientists and the golf industry.

Williams, who served as GCSAA president in 1996, will speak on "The Team Versus the Zone Approach to Maintenance Crews."

He will examine the pros and cons of each of these crew-management systems, helping attendees choose which method would best serve them.

Horton knows of what he will

speaking in his talk, "Pros and Cons of Going for the Top." He has been a superintendent at two of the country's most famed facilities (Winged Foot Golf Club and Westchester Country Club), served as director of sports and grounds at Westchester CC, was a regional vice president of a golf course management company, and since March 1993 has been

in charge of the all Pebble Beach Co.'s golf courses and other land.

How many public course superintendents wish they could have country club-type fertility on their public course budget?

Wilber, who owns and operates Wilber Turf and Soil Services in Rocklin, Calif., and consults on golf courses across the United States and in the United Kingdom, will tell them how to accomplish it.

The subject of turfgrass fertil-

ity is an ever-changing and often-complicated road of twists and turns, he says, but by being aware of several key areas, turfgrass managers can untangle the knots that might otherwise keep them from having the best possible fertilizer program. In many cases, "less expensive" does not have to mean "cheap," he says. It can mean "success."

In his talk, "Put-a-Pencil-to-It Help for Supers," Buchen will

unveil a treasure chest of money-saving tips, tricks of the trade and a potpourri of maintenance ideas. One of only 14 golf course superintendents in the world who has been certified as a Master Greenkeeper by the British & International Golf Greenkeepers Association, Buchen's many travels to hundreds of golf courses have revealed to him myriad opportunities for improving maintenance operations.

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Addition of calcium to the soil by traditional means is not usually efficient or effective in treating the calcium deficiency of turfgrass. Once applied, the common forms of liming materials can rapidly change to compounds that are insoluble in water and not readily available to the plant. Continuous applications over long time periods are necessary to effect even modest improvements in calcium uptake.

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