

# GOLF COURSE NEWS

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INSIDE

## Sophisticated Irrigation

Fertigation, filtration, acid injection and GPS technology take irrigation into the future ..... 9, 21-23

## Something Old, Something New

Renovations and restorations of older and classic courses complement new construction ..... 25



### A ROSSIAN TASK MADE EASIER

Poland Spring Golf Club superintendent Dick Fahey, left, and mechanic Ben Perreault hold an original Donald Ross rendering, from 1913, that has aided a bunker restoration at the Maine resort. See story page 25.

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## New Turfgrass America eyes national market

By A. OVERBECK

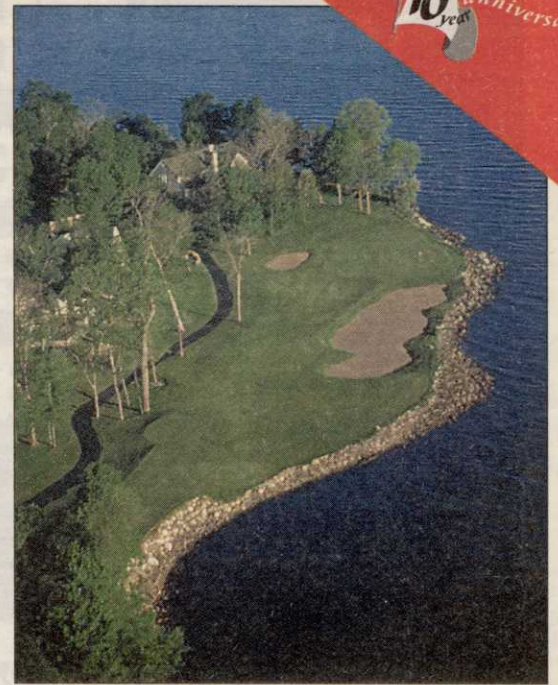
GRANBURY, Texas — In a move to expand beyond their regional reach, three Texas turf companies and a Florida grower have formed an alliance creating a new full-service firm here. The new entity, Turfgrass America, combines Thomas Brothers Grass, Crenshaw and

Doguet Turf and Milberger Turf Farms with Apollo, Fla.-based Elsberry Greenhouses.

While the merger was completed May 14, Milberger and Thomas Brothers have been considering the move for a year and a half.

"As we all looked at the

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### A SHORE BET

Black Brook, which has opened along with its sister track, The Sanctuary Course, is nestled along the shores of Mille Lacs Lake in Minnesota. The courses are designed by John Harbottle in collaboration with 1993 U.S. Amateur champion John Harris and owner Chip Glaser. The Sanctuary Course is geared toward the average player, with shorter yardage than its counterpart Black Brook. Harbottle feels the courses should be "instant classics." See story, page 30.

## Z-Net may revolutionize slow-growing grasses

LITTLE ROCK, Ark. — Tannenbaum Golf Course on Greers Ferry Lake near Heber Springs may have written its name into golf course history when it opened for public play in June. No scoring records were broken. The big story was a process that doubles the speed of growth for zoysiagrass, an excellent turf many superintendents have not used because of its notorious slow growth.

Z-Net, a new patented growing method developed in Japan and brought to America by Winrock



A crew lays down a roll of Z-Net with zoysiagrass implanted in it.

Grass Farm, Inc. here, was used on the fairways and roughs at Tannenbaum for

the first time in America. The new technology produces complete grow-in

during just one growing season — about twice as fast as standard sprigs or plugs, according to Winrock President Frank Whitbeck.

"Z-NET worked beautifully," said Tannenbaum course superintendent Scott White. "We grew in our zoysiagrass fairways and roughs in a little bit longer than the four to six months they predicted. But last summer was a hot summer and it was hard to get anything to grow. Right now it's 90 to 95 percent

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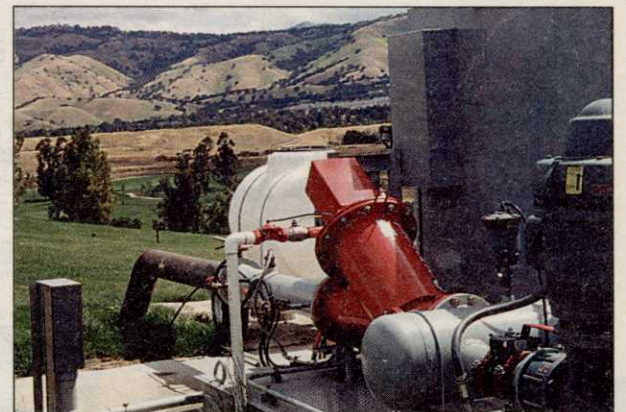
## Fertigation, filtration systems said growing in popularity

By PETER BLAIS

Demands for improved playing conditions have led many courses to install fertigation, acid-injection and filtration systems as part of their pumping stations.

Tanks, tubing and controllers for both fertigation and acid-injection systems (which improve water quality) can be rigged up to a pump station at a cost ranging from \$7,000 to \$15,000, a dramatic reduction from the \$20,000 to \$30,000 price tag common just a few years ago, said

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The red attachment filters water to this pump station.

## Country club fertility on a public's budget

By DAVID WILBER

The subject of turfgrass fertility is an ever-changing and often complicated road of twists and turns. But by being aware of several essential areas, turfgrass managers at public, resort and daily-fee golf operations can untangle the knots that might otherwise keep them from having

the best possible fertilizer program.

There is a myth that only the private club is spending enough money to do the fertility management job correctly. From the standpoint of many golf facilities, public and private, fertility management and fertilizer purchasing is often a guessing

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At left, in six weeks, the zoysiagrass is firmly established at Tannenbaum Golf Course in Arkansas. Z-Net's biodegradable netting disappears during grow-in. At right, zoysiagrass a fairway and rough is grown in and ready to play in 4-1/2 months.



## Z-Net maker thinks revolution

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grown in, and in many places it's entirely grown in.

"I'm excited by it and love the results I'm getting."

White had the zoysia installed nearly wall to wall — "fairways, roughs, tees, everything," he said. "We have bentgrass greens and fescue underneath the trees,

but we even used zoysia on the slopes to the greens."

The Z-Net process allowed Tannenbaum to open one year ahead of schedule, White said, adding that the cost is between that of row sodding and sprigging.

"We were the guinea pigs," White said. "Everything was under the microscope. A lot of superintendents came out to see it."

Much of the attention is because zoysiagrass is known for its low requirements for water, mowing, fertilizer and herbicides, and its wide tolerances to temperature, sun and shade. But its major deterrent has been its slow growth. Whitbeck feels Z-NET is the answer since it greatly speeds up slower growing grasses and its costs less than zoysiagrass sod.

Z-NET contains specially grown soil-free sprigs held between layers of biodegradable netting.

It is then simply rolled out like a carpet and top dressed. Z-NET typically grows in completely in four to six months, with some variance for growing conditions at the site. Conventional sprigging, plugging and strip sodding normally require between 15 and 24 months to achieve full grow-in.

During the first few months, the netting, which helps prevent erosion from wind, irrigation and rainfall, completely dissolves.

Z-NET can be installed any time the ground is not frozen. Once established, it offers all the maintenance benefits and environmental advantages of conventionally installed zoysiagrass. Since Winrock Grass Farm grows Meyer Z-52 zoysia, that is the cultivar it has been using, but Whitbeck said he could use other varieties.

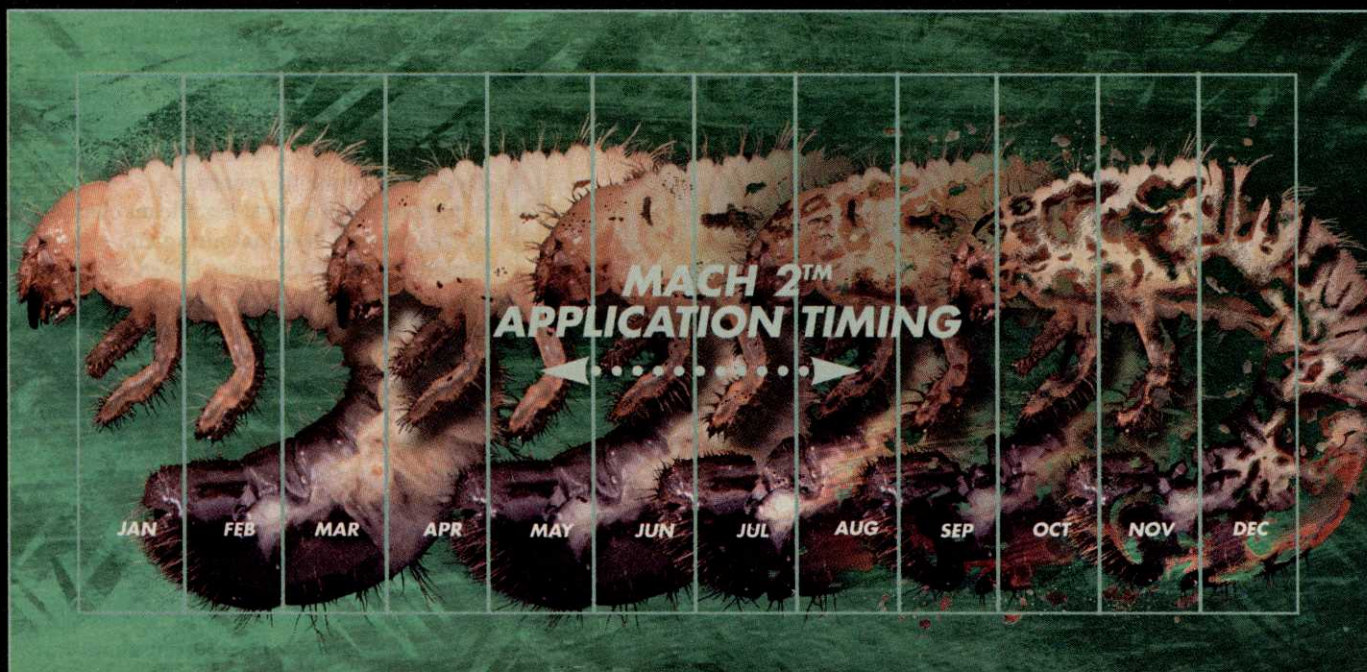
At maturity, Z-NET produces a dense turf with a strong divot-resistant root system and vertical leaf blades that many golfers prefer.

"We believe Z-NET will revolutionize the turfgrass industry and bring the benefits of Meyer Z-52 zoysiagrass to more golf courses, cities and home lawns at a lower cost than ever before," Whitbeck said.

"Most turfgrass research is headed in the wrong direction," he added. "Fast-growing grasses do not benefit the consumer or the environment. They only benefit the seed company or sod grower."

"That is why Z-NET is such a break-through technology. We can now grow in slower growing, environmentally friendly grasses faster."

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