

# GOLF COURSE NEWS

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INSIDE

## Bug Off!

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Take a look inside former GCSAA President Joe Baidy's new maintenance center ..... 24



### LOPEZ NOW AN ARCHITECT

Nancy Lopez, who has consulted on golf course designs in Japan and the Philippines, is embarking on a career in design. See an interview with Lopez, the Old Tom Morris Award winner, on page 31.

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### PERIODICAL



### OFF-SEASON? YOU BETCHA!

Among other tasks, the crew at The Valley Club in Sun Valley, Idaho, must maintain the club's platform tennis court. See Spring Prep section, pages 28-30.

## Roundup-tolerant bent looms on the horizon

By PETER BLAIS

COLUMBUS, Ohio — The Scotts Co. is developing genetically modified turfgrasses that are resistant to the herbicide Roundup, a potentially major breakthrough that could make it easier for superintendents to control weeds, according to Scotts researcher Dr. Virgil Meier.

Speaking at the recent Ohio Turfgrass Conference and Show here, Meier said a Roundup-resistant bentgrass crop could be ready for harvesting as early as 2003. The Marysville, Ohio-based firm is also researching Roundup-



resistant strains of Kentucky bluegrass and St. Augustinegrass. The bluegrass could be available in 2004.

"This whole area of genetically modified organisms (GMOs) will change how we maintain turfgrass 15 to 20 years from now, starting with the Roundup-resistant bentgrasses and bluegrasses that will be available in 2003 and 2004," Meier predicted.

Scotts has been testing genetically modified

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## Valderrama Declaration affirms stewardship

By TREVOR LEDGER

VALDERRAMA, Spain — "What started as a simple exploration of ecology has turned into a major, complex and dynamic program," said Jo Schatten, chairman of the European Golf Association Ecology Unit in his opening address to the U.S.-Europe Golf Environment Summit at Valderrama Golf Club here in November.

Two days later, leaders in golf from around the world were signing the Valderrama Declaration, a statement of intent affirming the golf industry's commitment to environmental stewardship in partnership with such



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## Novartis, AstraZeneca to merge, spin-off ag units

By ANDREW OVERBECK

BASEL, Switzerland — Consolidation continues in the agrochemicals industry as the boards of Novartis AG and AstraZeneca PLC have agreed to merge and spin-off their troubled agribusiness units to form Syngenta. The \$15-billion deal combines Novartis' Crop Protection and Seeds businesses and Zeneca Agrochemicals.

According to industry analysts, this move may be the first in another round of mergers. The Syngenta deal may affect St. Louis-based Monsanto Co., which earlier had been rumored to be in talks

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## Supers giddy about tourney

By A. OVERBECK

MOBILE, Ala. — The four superintendents hosting their peers at this year's GCSAA Golf Championship are feeling emotions of apprehension and excitement as they start to prepare for the event.

"I'd be lying to you if I told that I wasn't feeling the pressure to look good," said Michael Rienzi, superintendent at Kiva Dunes Golf Club. "To me this is big. I'm more nervous about this than I was about

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The 18th hole at the Falls Course at Magnolia Grove. The course will host the final round of championship play at the 2000 GCSAA Tournament.

GCSAA  
show preview  
pages 25-27

## GTCR commits \$100M to new Husband firm

By PETER BLAIS

CHICAGO — GTCR Golder Rauner, LLC has committed \$100 million in equity financing to back former Cobblestone Golf Group Chief Executive Officer James A. (Bob) Husband and his executive team to start Heritage Golf Group, LLC, a new course acquisition/management firm based in San Diego.

The commitment includes an initial investment of \$50 million, with potential to provide up to \$100 million or more, based on

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Bob Husband

# Syngenta

Continued from page 1

with Novartis, and is under renewed pressure from investors to shed its agrochemical business.

The transaction between Novartis and AstraZeneca, however, is far from complete as shareholder and regulatory approvals are required before Syngenta can get down to business. Novartis will hold a shareholder meeting on April 12 and AstraZeneca's will be on May 26. It is anticipated that the merger transaction will be approved in the second half of 2000.

Once the transaction is approved, Syngenta will be a force in the market. The company had combined sales in 1998 of \$7.9 billion and will have an estimated 24-percent global market share in the agrochemicals market with a presence in more than 100 countries. In comparison, previous industry leader, Monsanto has a global market share of 13 percent.

"The launch of Syngenta creates the first global dedicated agribusiness company, a leader in its industry that will be well positioned for growth," said Novartis Chairman and Chief Executive Officer Dr. Daniel Vasella.

Furthermore, the merger will result in \$525 million pre-tax savings by year three, and Syngenta will trim approximately 3,000 jobs in the combined worldwide crop protection employee base. The new company will have a workforce of 23,500.

Heinz Imhof, currently head of Novartis' Agribusiness, will become chairman of Syngenta and Michael Pragnell, presently CEO of Zeneca Agrochemicals, will become the CEO.

"Zeneca Agrochemicals and Novartis' Agribusiness are an ideal fit with complementary product portfolios and a strong international sales and marketing culture," said Pragnell. "Syngenta's unique focus and its science base will enable it to enhance value creation in agriculture at a time of substantial industry change."

Indeed, Syngenta is well represented in core markets. It has a number-one rank in the crop-protection market and is well positioned in herbicides, fungicides, insecticides, seed treatment and seeds.

According to Ed Ready, manager for environmental affairs for Zeneca Agrochemicals, the two companies match up well.

"Novartis has fungicides, herbicides and insecticides but they don't necessarily fit into the same markets, so there will not be a huge amount of overlap," he said.

Syngenta will also continue to have a strong presence in the

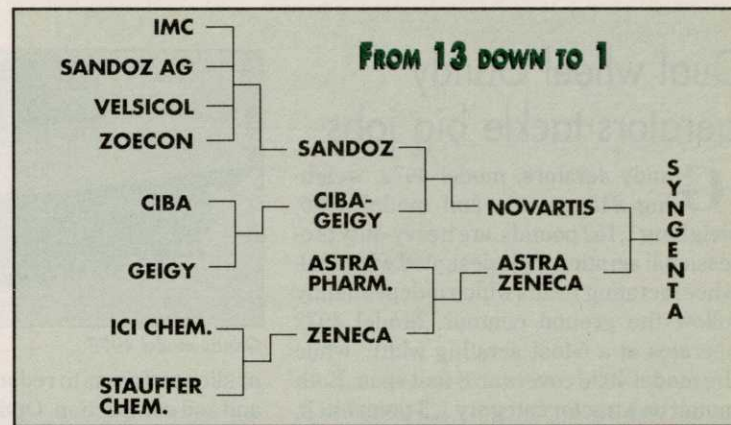
turf and ornamental markets.

"This business is about critical mass," said Ready. "With the resources to do the research, you can continue to bring out the new products that our customers need. The turf and ornamental business will continue to be an important part of that."

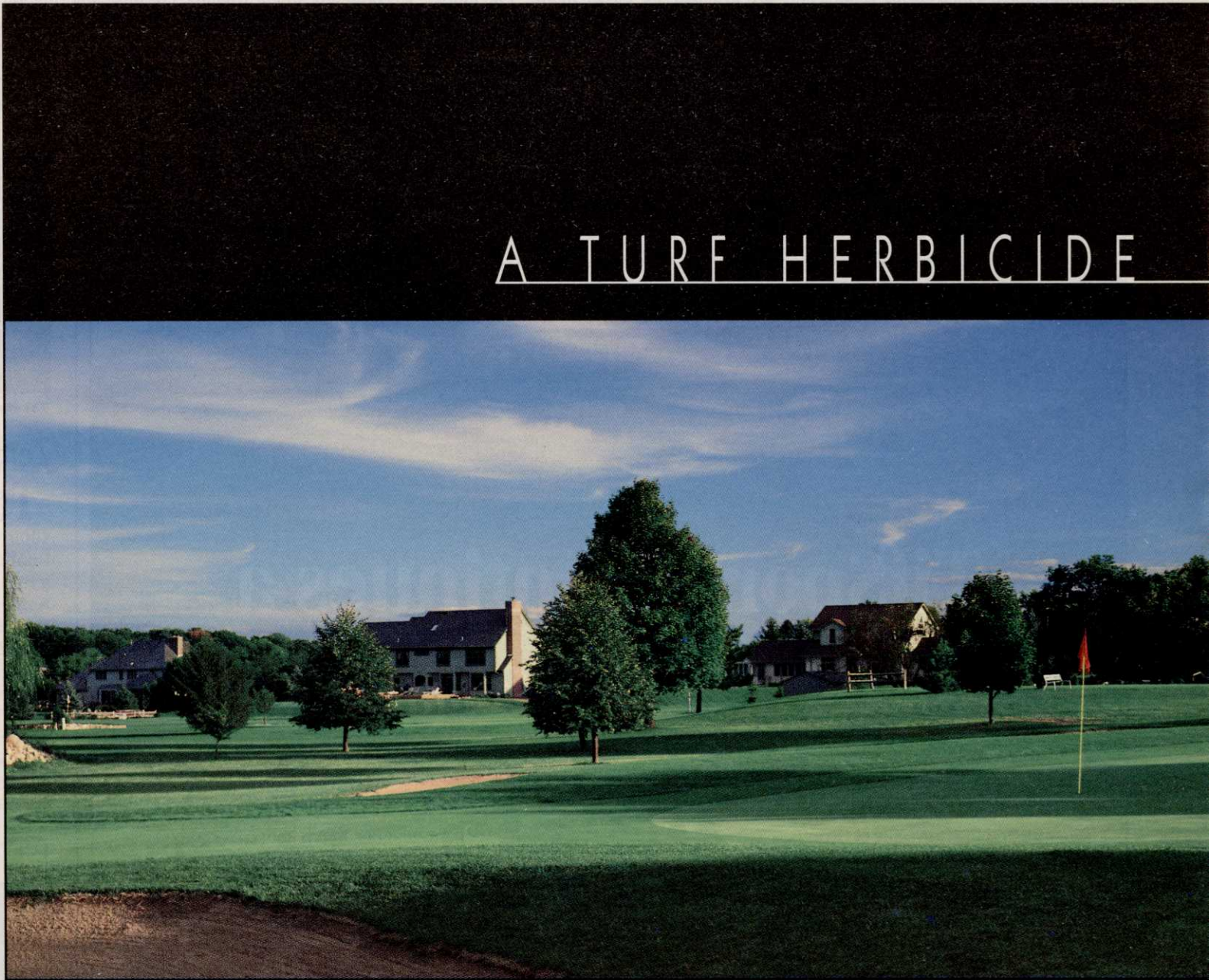
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Syngenta's eight-person executive committee will include

four from Novartis (N) and four from AstraZeneca: Michael Pragnell (AZ), CEO; John Atkin (N), COO crop protection; Jeff Beard (N), COO seeds; Bruce Bissell (AZ), chemical operations and global supply; David Evans (AZ), research and technology; David Jones (AZ), planning and business development; Christoph Mader (N), legal and taxes; Richard Steiblin (N), CFO. ▽



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