

GOLF COURSE NEWS

THE NEWSPAPER FOR THE GOLF COURSE INDUSTRY

A UNITED PUBLICATION
VOLUME 12, NUMBER 11
NOVEMBER 2000 • \$7.00

www.golfcoursenews.com

INSIDE

Design and Construction

In this month's special section learn the ins and outs of permitting a golf course project.....24

A Second Chance

John Vogts heads a course maintenance training program for troubled kids at the Glen Mills School.....8



CALIFORNIA'S COYOTE MOON

Former professional golfer Brad Bell has opened his third course, Coyote Moon, on a one-time logging tract in the High Sierras. The course is a rarity in California, as it was built strictly for golf, not to sell housing lots. Builders rushed the construction through in six months to beat the snows of the high country. Pictured above is the par-3 13th hole that features an 88 foot drop. See story page 15.

COURSE MAINTENANCE

The first installment of Piersol's Perspectives.....8
Tools of the Trade at Markut's PGA Golf Club 9
New company fights bugs with bugs 12

COURSE DEVELOPMENT

Thistle Golf Club adds nine holes 15
Camas Meadows debuts in Washington 16
Palmer course in state park taking shape 20

COURSE MANAGEMENT

Platinum Golf Properties sets up shop 27
Heritage Golf Group picking up steam 27
Zurich U.S. enters insurance market 28

SUPPLIER BUSINESS

Carl M. Freeman starts e-commerce venture 31
Golfsat teams with eFORCE 32
New products 34

PERIODICAL

BASF readies specialty product unit

By A. OVERBECK

RESEARCH TRIANGLE PARK, N.C. — Following the July 1 closing of its acquisition of American Cyanamid, BASF has completed the integration of product lines and management teams to form BASF Specialty Products Division (BASFspd). The new division will be responsible for the company's turf, ornamental and pest control business.

"In the past, BASF was more focused on the agricultural side," said Bill Baxter, business manager for turf, ornamental and pest control. "With the acquisition of American Cyanamid, which had a separate specialty products division that focused on turf and ornamental and pest control, it made sense

Continued on page 33



Florida's Ocean Hammock, opening in December, will host a U.S. Open qualifying round in May.

On the beach: Jack's new Ocean Hammock seems destined for fame

By JAY FINEGAN

PALM COAST, Fla. — Florida's first true oceanfront golf course to be built in 70 years will make its highly anticipated debut on December 5, with designer Jack Nicklaus scheduled to hit the inaugural drive off the first tee.

Located between St. Augustine and Daytona Beach on Florida's northeast coast, with six holes playing right along the Atlantic, Ocean Hammock Golf Club is guaranteed to be something special. Indeed, the U.S. Golf Association has already named the course to host regional qualifying rounds next May for the 2001 U.S. Open.

"It's a magnificent piece of property," said superintendent Tray Maltby. "I feel very fortunate to be here. Sometimes I have to pinch myself."

The 7,200-yard, par-72 layout is being developed at a cost of \$12 million by Lowe Enterprises, of Los Angeles, which operates four other courses in the Palm Coast

area, including such standouts as Pine Lakes, Cypress Knoll and Palm Harbor. The new layout also features two driving ranges, practice greens and a teaching tee.

Ocean Hammock appears destined to take its place among Florida's elite resort courses. In fact, head professional Chuck Kandt predicts it will become one of the most highly regarded courses in the country. "It's going to provide a golfing experience like no other on the East Coast," he said. "We have a goal to draw big-name tournaments here, and I'm confident it will happen."

'A TOUCH OF PEBBLE BEACH'

Nicklaus has put his stamp all over this course. Strategy and scenery intersect at nearly every turn, with great care taken to ensure the terrain works in harmony with its surroundings.

"You might say it joins a little of the West and East coasts by combining a

Continued on page 23

Pine bark beetles wreaking broad devastation across the South

By JOEL JOYNER

TEMPLE TERRACE, Fla. — Already stressed by heat, drought and increased urban development, pine trees in the Southeast are falling victim to widespread devastation by pine bark beetles. Alabama, Florida and South Carolina have been especially hard hit by the lethal pests.

Pine bark beetles, also known as engraver beetles, are small cylindrical insects that attack and kill pine trees by feeding and laying eggs in the inner bark of the tree. Once a pine is colonized by



Evidence of a large infestation of southern pine beetles in eastern Texas

these beetles, it will soon die.

Alabama is experiencing its worst drought on record with the northwest region of the state being the most severely affected. So far this year, Alabama has lost a record 1.5 million pines to the insects, 51 counties were classified at "epidemic" levels for the southern pine beetle (SPB), according to the Alabama Forestry Commission.

Continued on page 14

Injured golfer wins \$7.5 million settlement

By JAY FINEGAN

ALEXANDRIA, Va. — Lansdowne Resort Golf Club in northern Virginia has settled out of court for \$7.5 million to compensate a player who was struck in the neck by a stray golf ball. The settlement agreement came in late September, two and a half years after James Tobin was hit on the practice putting green at Lansdowne, a public 18-hole course in Loudoun County.

At the time of the accident, Tobin was a sales manager for General Electric. He was 42 years old, and a 2-handicap player. A stroke has left him unbalanced and unable to walk

Continued on page 30



Golfer wins settlement

Continued from page 1

or work. Surgeons had to remove part of his brain, severely impairing his ability to perform intellectual and physical activities.

Gerard Dumont, Lansdowne's general manager, said he was "deeply sympathetic" to Tobin's

medical condition, but he insisted the course was not at fault. "We firmly believe the practice facility and golf course were safe in 1998 and remain so today," he said in a statement released by the club.

But as the case was unfolding before a federal jury here in U.S. District Court, Lansdowne's insurance carriers, CNA and Royal SunAlliance, made the decision to settle. Lansdowne's attorney,

Steven Bancroft, could not be reached for comment.

Lansdowne is under management by Benchmark Hospitality Inc., of Houston. Calls to Benchmark were not returned.

FREAK ACCIDENT

The plaintiff's case centered on the proximity of the driving range to the practice green.

"The distance between the tee box on the range and the green

was anywhere from 130 to 160 yards," said attorney Gary Mims, of the firm Snead & Mims, which brought the lawsuit. "The green was directly on the side. It would have been a good place to put a bunker if you had a slight dogleg to the right. If you were hitting a long iron from the right side of the range and left your club face open, then the putting green is where the ball would not unlikely go."

According to Mims, the blow to his client's neck damaged an artery so severely that the flow of blood was affected. "It reached a point where it closed off and a clot was thrown, which caused a major stroke," he said.

The freak incident occurred on April 20, 1998, when Tobin was practicing his putting with some of his customers before a charity tournament. Suddenly, according to Mims, an errant golf ball from the driving range flew over a berm and struck him on the left side of his neck. "It felt like somebody hit me with a baseball bat," Tobin told the jury. "But I didn't pass out."

In fact, he went on to play 18 holes that day. Weeks later, suffering from headaches, he went to a doctor who diagnosed him as suffering from "caffeine abuse." But in July 1998, as his condition deteriorated, he went to an emergency room. Doctors determined that the golf ball strike 11 weeks earlier had caused major trauma to an artery, leading to the stroke.

"Jim Tobin had no reason to be a candidate for a stroke," Mims said. "He had no hypertension, his arteries were clean and he was a good athlete who had played basketball and tennis in college. The opposing side argued that the stroke was due to natural causes, but they couldn't explain why."

RISKY CONDITION

The Lansdowne course was designed by Robert Trent Jones Jr., but Jones was not named as a defendant, nor was his construction company, which built the course. "Our allegation in this case really wasn't the design," Mims said. "We argued that once management realized this condition existed, they should have done something about it."

Mims and his law partner, William O. Snead III, argued that management was aware of the hazard.

"We found a golf pro at Hilton Head [William Bratton Steele Chandler III] who had been the pro at Lansdowne in 1996," Mims said. "In deposition, he said he had recognized this danger. He brought it up to the powers that be at Lansdowne, that this was a situation that should be looked into. It would have been easy to fix. You could have put up a net, or moved the green back, or prohibited the use of them simultaneously. The pro said he couldn't explain why management failed to act."

"It's a matter of what they [management] considered likely to happen, and a risk that they found acceptable," Mims added. "Our position was that you take that risk, but Jim Tobin shouldn't pay for it. For less than \$10,000 for a net, the whole thing could

Golf Course Loans closed in the First Quarter, 2000

\$5,250,000
First Mortgage

Bristow Manor
Bristow, VA

Refinancing of an 18-hole daily fee course in suburban Washington D.C.

\$4,000,000
First Mortgage

St. James GC
Port St. Lucie, FL

Financing of a new 18-hole daily fee course in south Florida.

\$2,000,000
First Mortgage

Fairway Oaks CC
Abilene, TX

Refinancing of a private 18-hole non-equity country club.

\$5,125,000
First Mortgage

Glade Valley GC
Walkersville, MD

Acquisition of an 18-hole daily fee course in northern Maryland.

\$10,100,000
First Mortgage & Mezzanine Loan

Middle Island CC
Long Island, NY

Acquisition of an 18-hole daily fee facility east of New York City in Brookhaven, Long Island.



Golf & Marina Finance

\$14,000,000
First Mortgage

Hidden Creek CC
Reston, VA

Increase and extension of an existing loan to an 18-hole private country club in suburban Washington D.C.

\$2,400,000
First Mortgage

Four Seasons GC
Wilkes-Barre, PA

Acquisition of an 18-hole daily fee course in northeastern Pennsylvania.

\$7,200,000
First Mortgage

Polo Golf & CC
Atlanta, GA

Acquisition of an 18-hole private non-equity country club in suburban Atlanta.

\$1,500,000
First Mortgage

Golf Club of West Virginia
Parkersburg, WV

Refinancing of an 18-hole daily fee course in suburban Parkersburg.

\$4,150,000
First Mortgage

Bear Creek GC
Westminster, MD

Acquisition of an 18-hole daily fee course in northern Maryland.

These transactions represent timely, creative and flexible solutions to the financing of golf facilities. For your next golf course loan, please contact your Bank of America Golf & Marina Finance representative below.

Southeast - South Central

Jim McNiff
770-643-7787
james.mcniciff@bankofamerica.com

Debbie Suppa
770-643-7782
debra.suppa@bankofamerica.com

Paul Richards
770-643-7789
paul.richards@bankofamerica.com

Northeast - Midwest

Rick Nekoroski
978-777-8560
rick.nekoroski@bankofamerica.com

Rob Deignan
978-777-5057
robert.deignan@bankofamerica.com

West Coast to Texas

John Seeburger
949-234-1660
john.seeburger@bankofamerica.com

Mike Minerman
949-234-1668
mike.minerman@bankofamerica.com

Steve Sparks
775-832-4447
steven.sparks@bankofamerica.com

Settlement

Continued from page 30

have been avoided."

Since then, he added, Lansdowne has reoriented the driving range, so golfers now aim away from the practice green. The lower tier of the green, where Tobin was hit, has been closed.

COURSE DISPUTES LIABILITY

Throughout the legal proceedings, Lansdowne maintained that it was not at fault.

In Gerard Dumont's statement, he said that Lansdowne personnel, including starters and rangers, "are trained to monitor the practice range to ensure it is used in a safe manner. In fact, Lansdowne prides itself on an exemplary safety record since the time of our opening in 1991."

Dumont's statement said "there has been no determination that the practice facility was hazardous to our guests or members. Similarly, there was never any determination that Mr. Tobin's unfortunate medical condition resulted from any action on the part of Lansdowne Resort. To this day, it has never been determined who hit the golf ball or from where the golf ball was hit that Mr. Tobin says struck him while on our putting green. No jury or judge determined the reason for his medical condition in this case."

"They never admitted liability," agreed Mims. "And yes, the insurance companies did control the defense of the case. But it's hard to believe, with what the case settled for, that there isn't at least a tacit acknowledgement that they could have lost in court."

Jim Tobin, who lives in Charlotte, N.C., now gets around in a wheelchair. "I don't care about the money," he said. "I would just like to get my life back, which I can't. I just want to walk and play tennis with my son again." ■

GOLF COURSE MARKETPLACE

To reserve space in this section, call
Jean Andrews, 207-925-1099

You'll want to play barefoot on our certified grasses.

- FEATURES:**
- Tifton 419
 - Midlawn
 - El Toro Zoysia
 - Meyer Z-52 Zoysia
 - Cavalier Zoysia

- Sprig Planting Service
- Laying Machinery Rentals
- Row Planting Service
- Lay and Play
- Fairway Cuts (seasonal)
- Pads
- Big Rolls



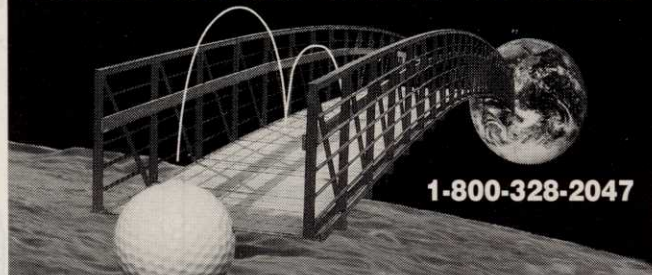
P.O. BOX 56440 • LITTLE ROCK, AR 72215
1-800-666-0007 501-975-6281 Little Rock www.quailvalley.com

Quail Valley GRASSES

SPORTS • GOLF • COMMERCIAL • RESIDENTIAL • SOD PRODUCERS

barefoot walkin' thick

BRIDGING ANY SPACE



1-800-328-2047

CONTINENTAL BRIDGE

8301 State Highway 29 N, Alexandria, MN 56308 USA
Phone: 320-852-7500 Fax: 320-852-7067

E-Mail: conbridge@continentalbridge.com • www.continentalbridge.com



SOIL AND WATER SYSTEMS

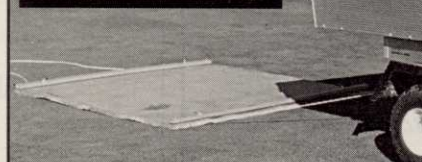
- Lowers Water pH • Controls Soil pH
- Improves Soil Drainage • Controls Algae
- Reduces Sodium in Soil
- Improves Effluent Water For Irrigation use
- Reduces Bicarbonates & Carbonate

SO₂ GENERATORS

11838 Tammy Way Grass Valley, CA 95949
(530) 271-0915 aquaso2.com

GREENS BRUSH MAT

The perfect light duty drag mat for gently brushing in top dressing and before mowing.



A thick 5' x 5' natural fiber mat surface that evenly works top dressing into greens or stands grass up prior to mowing for a better cut. Won't damage sensitive greens grass and is flexible for consistent performance on uneven surfaces. A single hook point on either end attaches to the back of most any vehicle.

15% OFF!

NY TURF SHOW, Nov. 14-16

For more information or a free catalog, contact:

Reliable Golf Course Supplies

800-274-6815
800-585-4443 Fax

Or visit our website at

www.reliablegolf.com

© 2000
Reliable Golf Course Supplies
643 Upper Glen Street
Queensbury, NY 12804 USA

Shouldn't your Grounds Crew look as groomed as your greens?



Golf Shirts

\$795
with your logo

GOLF SHIRTS • CAPS
JACKETS • PANTS • RAINSUITS

CHESTNUT IDENTITY APPAREL

800-336-8977
www.chestnutid.com

- Speeds up play - Reduces playing time up to 20% per round
- Cost effective - Pays for itself in months - Lasts for years
- More enjoyment - No pacing and hunting for sprinkler heads
- Markers for fairways, tees, driving range and cart path
- Available in all popular colors and can customize

A Visible Marking System You Can Mow Right Over

Test Trial Offer! One Hole FREE for 45 Days

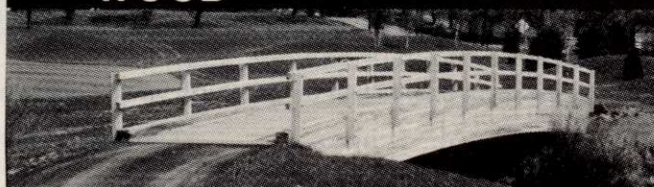
The Kirby Marker System

800-925-4729
760-931-2624

Fax 760-931-1753

www.Kirbymarkers.com

LAMINATED WOOD BRIDGES



PEDESTRIAN & VEHICULAR

Order Direct From The Leading Manufacturer in U.S.

- Complete Prefabricated Packages
- Ready for Fast Erection
- Direct Distribution Throughout the U.S.
- Custom Design & Engineering



CALL 800-777-8648

P.O. Box A • Morrisville, NC 27560
Tel. 919/467-6155 • FAX 919/469-2536

GOOSECHASE

800-662-5021

Repel Geese and Ducks from Grass!
Eliminate mess and property damage!



Food-grade, biodegradable taste-aversion agent. Renders food sources unpalatable and inedible so geese leave. Easy to use - just spray onto grass.

1 gallon (per acre) \$95

THE BIRD CONTROL "X-PERTS"



300 N. ELIZABETH ST. DEPT. GCN
CHICAGO IL 60607 WWW.BIRD-X.COM
312-BAN-BIRD 312-226-2480 FAX

HARCO DUCTILE IRON FITTINGS FOR GOLF COURSE IRRIGATION SYSTEMS

Sizes 2" through 12", all configurations including "knock-on" repair couplings. High Strength, high corrosion resistance.

The Harrington Corporation
P.O. Box 10335
Lynchburg, Va 24506
804-845-7094 Fax 845-8562

