

# GOLF COURSE NEWS

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#### A PRESIDENTIAL VISIT

While in town for the Republican Convention in Philadelphia, former President George Bush paid a visit to Eric Bergstol's latest project — Pine Hill Golf Club in Pine Hill, N.J. Bergstol, president of Empire Golf, plans to officially open the Tom Fazio-designed layout this spring.

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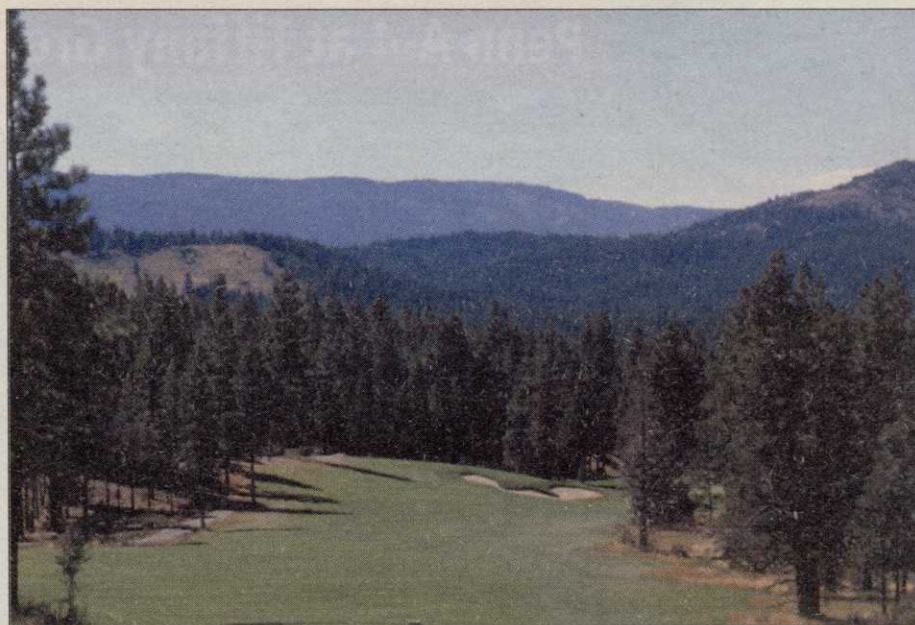
## Water crisis looms in S. California

By JOEL JOYNER

SANTA ANA, Calif. — Radical changes in California water policy could leave Southern California golf courses in “a world of hurt,” according to agronomist Mike Huck, of the U.S. Golf Association’s Green Section. From his base here in the southwest region, Huck has been tracking a complicated battle between environmentalists, farmers, municipalities, government officials and others over the future of water distribution in the Golden State.

Indeed, the unfolding situation portends such dire consequences that one water-resource specialist, engineer Dana Ripley, is urging that Southern California

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The 1st hole at the “Dragon” course at Gold Mountain

## Dramatic new Dragon course opens in remote ‘Lost Sierra’

By DOUG SAUNDERS

CLIO, Calif. — The surging economy has been the catalyst for numerous golf-driven real estate developments around the country. Every region has seen the creation of new golf courses, including some areas where you would least expect it. A prime example is Gold Mountain, located in this tiny hamlet in California’s Sierra Nevada mountains.

Here, in a town of 200 located in a county that has only one stop light, is a 1,300-acre development situated on a two-lane mountain road overlooking ranch land, the Feather River, a solitary railroad track, and the towering Sierra peaks.

Is this where you want to retire? Why not, is the philosophy at Gold Mountain.

The developers, Dariel and Peggy Garner, have made their mark in such various business ventures as marketing wood by-products overseas, developing bank-

ing software, and growing specialty vegetables. Their diverse interests and imagination lead them on a search for a natural setting, a place to settle down. They stopped looking when they found this remote area of Northern California known as the Lost Sierra.

“We were trying to find a place that we could retire to, but what we found was a place of such solitude and natural beauty that we felt we should share it with others,” explained Peggy Garner.

#### SELLING SOLITUDE

To make that dream a reality required a different approach to development. From the beginning, the Garners would make their remote mountain setting the cornerstone of its appeal. To incorporate these features the Garners took careful steps in the design process by bringing together an interesting mix of collaborators.

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## Going East: Simplot buys Lange-Stegmann, to extend POLYON deal

By ANDREW OVERBECK

BOISE, Idaho — Simplot Turf and Horticulture (Simplot T&H) continues its eastward march with the acquisition of the professional product line from St. Louis-based fertilizer formulator Lange-Stegmann. The deal includes the Lange-Stegmann production facilities for its professional products in the golf, landscape and lawn-care markets. The financial terms of

the agreement were not disclosed.

Located on the Mississippi River, the newly acquired production facilities provide Simplot T&H with efficient intermodal distribution service to a large segment of the United States east of the Rocky Mountains.

“This allows us to move east,” said Bill Whitacre, Simplot T&H president. “The

mountains are a natural barrier for our operations in the West. The Lange-Stegmann facility has a phenomenal location right on the Mississippi and has access to an intermodal barge terminal. The efficiency of having that location right in the heart of the United States is really an opportunity for us.”

Simplot T&H will also add Lange-branded greens-grade and

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## Safety-minded lawyer urges ‘mulligan’ ban

By JAY FINEGAN

NEW YORK — “NO MULLIGANS!” If there is one sign that every golf course should post prominently, that would be it. So says lawyer Robert D. Lang, who has drawn fresh attention to the dangers — legal and otherwise — of wild golf shots.

In a recent cover story in the Journal of the New York State Bar Association (NYSBA), Lang cites numerous personal injury cases in which errant shots struck golfers, caddies, spectators and even motorists. Among the potential defendants, he said, are the golfer who hit the shot, the course or club owners if a suit alleges negligent



Robert D. Lang

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## Simplot deals

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fairway fertilizers to its product line. "How we integrate those products is being looked at right now," said Whitacre. "But we are committed to continuing to serve Lange-Stegmann's customer base and distribution network."

The acquisition by Simplot T&H marks the end of Lange-Stegmann's nearly 70-year run in the professional turf business. "We really enjoyed the turf business and we are proud of our accomplishments," said Mike Stegmann. "We are confident that we could continue to grow the business but at the same time you see the industry tightening up with fewer customers and fewer suppliers. It does leave you with some questions about the access to proprietary active ingredients in the future. So there are some uncertainties. It wasn't the fear of those that caused the decision, but they were a contributing factor."

Stegmann will remain with the company through the transition process and does not rule out future involvement with Simplot T&H. "There might be some other things that we are involved in," he said.

### INTER-MODAL EFFICIENCIES

Lange-Stegmann's production facilities and inter-modal infrastructure give Simplot T&H an efficient and instant entry into the heart of the country. "The economics of barges is phenomenal," said Whitacre. "We have the raw products sitting right there in these huge storage facilities, so we don't have to duplicate those facilities. We can just haul it across the street."

According to Stegmann, having access to the inter-modal facility brings cheaper shipping costs. "For a run from New Orleans to St. Louis, a barge costs five dollars per ton, while rail costs \$20 per ton. That is a dramatic cost savings," he said.

Simplot T&H will also be making improvements at the production facility. "We had an engineering crew in last week," said Whitacre. "And we will upgrade the facility for increased capacity and various quality enhancements."

Whitacre also said that the company would be looking for similar locations in the East and possibly the Southeast and Texas. "Our interest is to build the infrastructure we need to become a national distribution company," he said.

### LANGE-STEGMANN'S FUTURE

Lange-Stegmann will retain its agricultural and inter-modal business and will be starting up a company called Agrotain International.

"Agrotain is an active ingredient that causes regular urea to

act in a very different way and it can be an extremely efficient source of stabilized nitrogen which in some ways competes with slow release fertilizers," said Stegmann. "It has applications in both turf and agriculture so we hope to stay close to the turf business through Agrotain."

### EXPANDING THE POLYON DEAL

At press time, Simplot T&H was also close to signing an ex-

panded agreement with Pursell Technologies Inc. (PTI) to market POLYON controlled-release fertilizer in all of its professional turfgrass fertilizer products in the majority of the Midwest and eastern United States.

"We are very interested in using POLYON under our label on almost a national basis," said Whitacre. "POLYON will be our coated controlled-release nitro-

gen that we will use in our Simplot-branded products."

"This deal matches up their direct selling machine with our technology," said PTI president David Pursell. "So we don't have to ramp up and put 150 sales people in the field. This allows us to focus on cutting-edge capital resource things such as our FarmLinks project and controlled-release pesticide research."

Previously, Lange-Stegmann had been PTI's Midwest POLYON distributor and Turf Partners (which Simplot T&H also bought out) was its distributor in the East. "Simplot has been rolling up some companies and one good thing that has worked well for us is that we have not had to go cut anybody off, because Simplot is buying our existing relationships," said Pursell. ■

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