

GOLF COURSE NEWS

THE NEWSPAPER FOR THE GOLF COURSE INDUSTRY

A UNITED PUBLICATION
VOLUME 12, NUMBER 9
SEPTEMBER 2000 • \$7.00

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DEALING WITH CONSOLIDATION

Anthony Williams has been director of golf operations at Renaissance PineIsle Resort in Georgia (the par-3, 250 yard, 15th hole is pictured above) for 14 years. During his tenure he has worked under three different owners, six general managers and three directors of golf. For tips on how to survive ownership changes, see his story on page 7.

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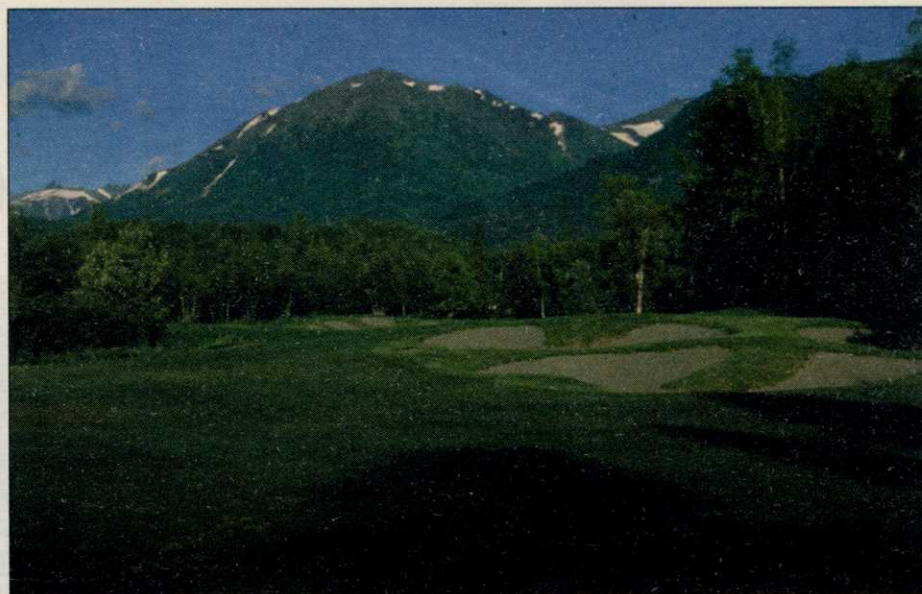
By JAY FINEGAN

HARRISBURG, Pa. — Golf course values are stable or declining. The northern states are the new land of opportunity for companies looking to buy golf properties. And private clubs have pulled even with daily-fee facilities as desirable targets in the course acquisition market.

Those are among the findings of a survey by Golf Property Analysts (GPA) here, which polled course management companies, investors and financial institutions involved in funding golf course real-estate transactions.

According to Laurence A. ("Larry") Hirsh, whose Hirsh Valuation Group owns GPA, the survey signals that the

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The 600-yard 18th hole at Robin Nelson's Moose Run in Alaska

Wild Alaska: Robin Nelson opens course at aptly named Moose Run

By JAY FINEGAN

ANCHORAGE, Alaska — They call Alaska "the last frontier," and the motto seemed right on the money to golf architect Robin Nelson. He recently unveiled his newest creation, the Creek Course at Moose Run, and he's still talking about the bears, wolves, lynx, moose and other critters who took a keen interest in the new layout during construction.

Alaska is by far our largest state, and this is a course to match — 7,324 yards from the back tees, 5,183 from the reds, with two holes running to 600 yards or more, and a slope rating near the top of the charts, at 142. The cart paths alone stretch over five miles and cross two suspension bridges where the course traverses Ship Creek. All fairways are separated by at least 300 feet of towering trees and dense brush — there's no possibility of slicing a drive into an adjacent

fairway. The par-72, 18-hole design features dramatic elevation changes and stunning mountain views all around.

"The Creek Course is hardly your basic golf course," Nelson said. "Every time you come around a corner, there's a different look and feel to the course and its aesthetics. And there are many strategic options as to how to play each hole."

The course is situated on the sprawling Army base at Fort Richardson, next to the old Hill Course at Moose Run, built in 1951. The entire 36-hole complex, owned and operated by the military, is open for public play.

"The people in charge up here are real golf fanatics," Nelson said, referring to the base's top brass and senior civilian officials. "Four years ago they started soliciting bids for a second course. They had 700 acres and we were supposed to

Continued on page 26

Despite vandalism and fire, superintendent Szklinski prepares Southern Hills CC for next U.S. Open

By JOHN TORSIELLO

TULSA, Okla. — Golf fans attending next year's U.S. Open at Southern Hills Country Club here will likely marvel at the impeccable and challenging beauty of the Perry Maxwell-designed layout. But few will know of the effort and sacrifice made by golf course superintendent John Szklinski, his staff and the membership at Southern Hills, which made the staging of the prestigious event at the Midwestern venue possible.

The Open is back at Southern Hills after a 42-year hiatus. In 1958, playing in sweltering heat, club-throwing Tommy Bolt won his only Open title here, besting a young South African named Gary Player by four strokes. Bolt's skillful use of his driver on Southern Hills' tree-lined fairways, fringed by gnarly and deep rough, was the deciding factor.



The 13th hole at Southern Hills Country Club

Getting a golf course in shape to host a U.S. Open is a daunting enough task. But the staff and members

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XS Inc. to extend ag model to turf market

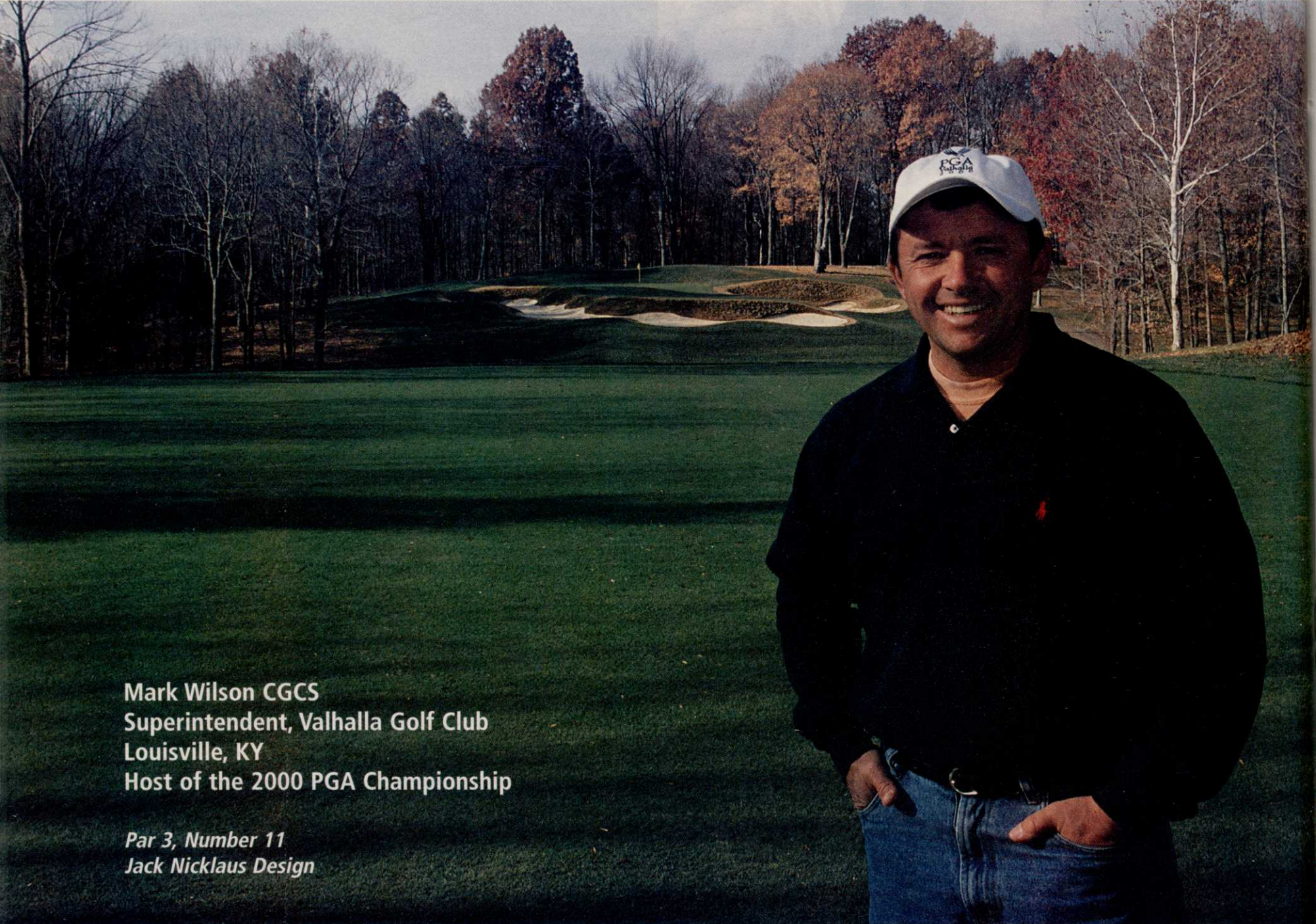
By ANDREW OVERBECK

RALEIGH, N.C. — Following the successful launch of its agricultural-input e-commerce venture, XS Inc., based here, is primed to expand into the turf and ornamental marketplace with XSTurf.com, which is set to be introduced by the end of the year.

The company's two-year-old flagship, XSAg.com, has quickly become a market leader, ranking at the top of Promar International's Aug. 3 ranking of agriculture specific e-commerce websites. XSAg brings buyers and sellers together to trade chemicals, seeds and equipment parts.

Continued on page 34

Penn Pals™ at Valhalla



Mark Wilson CGCS
Superintendent, Valhalla Golf Club
Louisville, KY
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Par 3, Number 11
Jack Nicklaus Design

We rebuilt or enlarged 9 tees for the 2000 PGA Championship and seeded them all with Penncross

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EPA proposes new wetland protection regs

WASHINGTON — The Clinton administration has proposed significant new protection for tens of thousands of acres of wetlands across the United States. Under the action, which was taken August 10, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the Army Corps of Engineers are proposing to address a regulatory loophole in the Clean Water Act by clarifying the types of activities that can harm wetlands, and thus require regulation.

"Due to a legal loophole that has been exploited," said EPA Administrator Carol M. Browner, "an additional 20,000 acres of wetlands have been lost in this country over the last two years. The proposal will allow us to go as far as we can through administrative reforms to close this loophole and protect wetlands."

EPA and the Corps are proposing to regulate certain activities that often destroy or fill in wetlands. The proposal will clarify the current regulations under the Clean Water Act, Section 404, to address environmentally destructive earth-moving activities (such as mechanized land clearing, ditching, channelization and in-stream mining) associated with draining wetlands.

Under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act, the Corps issues per-

mits after it completes a careful environmental review of dredged material from proposed projects, including the potential adverse effects on wetlands. This permit program is designed to minimize the environmental impact on wetlands, while also requiring off-setting actions, such as creating or restoring other wetlands.

To protect wetlands, EPA and the Corps first clarified in August 1993 that Clean Water Act

permits were required for any discharges associated with draining wetlands. Referred to as the "Tulloch" rule, that definition was challenged by a number of trade associations and overturned in January 1997 by the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia. Affirmed in June 1998 by the U.S. Court of Appeals, the Court's decision resulted in a loophole in the wetlands regulatory program, leav-

ing certain forms of environmentally destructive activities essentially unchecked according to the EPA.

Since the 1997 District Court decision, EPA and the Corps estimate that nearly 20,000 acres of wetlands have been destroyed and more than 150 miles of streams channeled without environmental review or mitigation.

In addition to realizing no net loss of wetlands through the

Clean Water Act regulatory program, the Clinton administration's Clean Water Action Plan has already committed to an annual net gain of 100,000 acres of wetlands beginning in 2005, through wetlands restoration programs.

The proposal to change the definition of dredged materials will be published in the Federal Register and will be open for public comment for 60 days.

stellar performance...



Rainmaker breaks ground at Newport National GC

COLUMBIA, Md. — The Rainmaker Group has signed an agreement to build the first 18 holes of the Newport National Golf Club, a planned 36-hole golf complex designed by Arthur Hills/Steve Forrest & Associates.

The project is located on Aduidneck Island just north of the historic community of Newport, R.I. The first 18 holes will be a private, members-only facility. Construction is scheduled to start this fall. Rainmaker hopes to have the first nine holes ready for play in the fall of 2001, with the complete course open in the spring of 2002.

The second 18-hole layout will be a high-quality daily-fee facility designed to service the demands of the burgeoning tourist market. Preliminary design and permitting is already underway, and construction should begin next fall.

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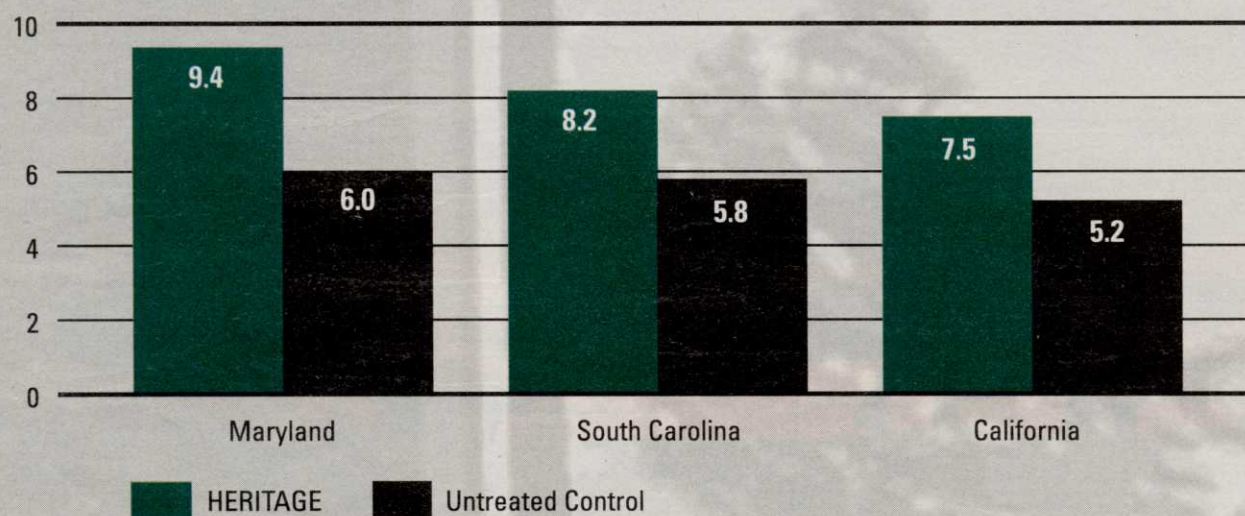
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Supply outpacing demand as new courses multiply

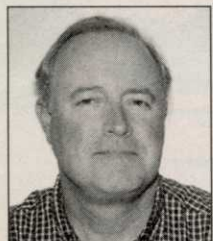
It was bound to happen sooner or later. Given the explosive growth of new U.S. golf courses – an average of 303 a year from 1991 through 1999 – it was inevitable that “supply” would eventually outstrip “demand.” And now it has, according to a study of industry trends by the National Golf Foundation (NGF).

Here are the hard numbers. In 1986, there were about 1,900 golfers for every course in the country. The ratio shot up in 1990, with 2,250 players for every “18-hole equivalent.” This was a period – ’86 to ’90 – when the golfing population was rising, but financing difficulties placed a lot of development projects on hold. Consequently, demand began to outpace supply.

When the real estate market recovered, however, course builders made up for lost time, rapidly shifting projects from “in planning” to “under construction.” By 1998, the number of courses being built hit an all-time high of 1,069. Today, there are 1,970 golfers per course, back down near the 1986 levels.

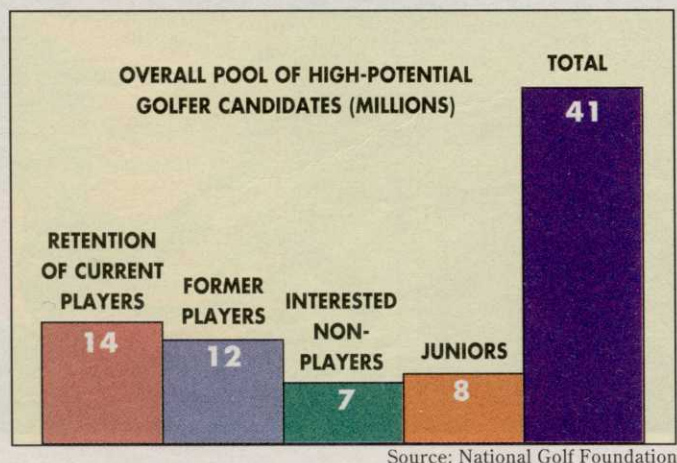
This is great news for golfers – less crowded courses – but not so great for course owners and managers.

The situation isn’t likely to change anytime soon. In the NGF’s new report, “Trends in the Golf Industry,” it projects that the game will experience a “natural” addition of three to four million new golfers and about 100 million more rounds over the next decade.



Jay Finegan,
editor

LATENT DEMAND OPPORTUNITY



That works out to a growth rate of one to two percent a year.

At the same time, however, the number of golf courses will likely grow at two to three percent a year, outstripping the new demand. “If this supply/demand imbalance continues,” the report concludes, “then the operating performance of the average golf facility can be expected to erode.”

And the imbalance will continue – and then some. That annual average of 303 courses openings over the past decade takes into account the early ’90s, when openings were in the 350 range. Momentum has accelerated sharply since then. Last year, 509 courses opened for business, and at year-end 946 courses were under construction and 908 more were in the planning stage. Obviously, that translates into even fewer golfers per course, and it’s undoubtedly one reason that course valuations are now beginning to stagnate and even decline (see story on page one).

Continued on next page

What will come of golf’s e-commerce revolution?

Business-to-business (B2B) e-commerce ventures – stock market fluctuations be damned – are infiltrating every corner of American commerce, including the golf industry. In the past year, dot-coms, e-portals and cybermarkets have descended upon the golf course marketplace, all clamoring for a piece of the pie and all apparently looking to start their own “revolution.”

By accessing online catalogs, auctions and clearinghouses, superintendents can now buy commodities like chemicals, fertilizers and seed online (sorry guys, no greens mowers yet).

Why the sudden influx of online offerings?

Well, the numbers don’t lie. A report by Thomas Weisel Partners, a San Francisco-based merchant bank, stated that the B2B sector “could potentially generate between \$1 to \$2 trillion worth of new market capitalization” and that in the next 10 years, B2B efforts will lead to huge operational savings for U.S. businesses. These figures, while general, have lead e-entrepreneurs to explore every niche market in sight.

While the turf and ornamental market weighs in, by industry estimates, at around \$4 billion – sizably smaller than the \$50-billion agriculture market – these numbers have undoubtedly lured the newest player, XS Inc., to the market. XS Inc. launched XSag.com two years ago and is now one of the e-commerce leaders in the agricultural input market. The company will introduce XSTurf.com later this year.

XSag has more than 50,000 users and does “several million dollars” in transactions each month, according to Harry Albert, director of the company’s specialty business unit. XSTurf aims to capture superintendents who have an annual budget of at least \$100,000 for chemicals, seed and parts – a number Albert estimates at 10,000.

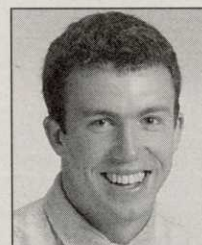
While distributors, manufacturers and dealers are starting to list products online and team up with allied websites, some are doing it just to gain visibility in a new marketplace and others are using it as a stop-gap measure while they gear up their own websites. After all, as one industry executive told me earlier this year, why should a company pay a e-commerce website a transaction fee (further diluting already thin margins) when they can build their own site?

Whether these new B2B sites will replace existing distribution channels remains to be seen, but they will surely increase competition and introduce new efficiencies to the marketplace.

However, as almost everyone in the fledgling dot-com business admits, the turf and ornamental market cannot support this many B2B sites.

Even as more sites come online, insiders are already predicting the market shakedown and consolidation of e-commerce ventures that will inevitably occur.

In the next three to five years, a wave of consolidations will begin to sweep through the field, said Kirk Sanders, who heads Professional Golf Commerce (pgc.com), an e-commerce venture that serves clubhouse, maintenance and food and beverage professionals. “Through either consolidation or questionable ventures just dying on the vine,” he said, “ultimately there will be room for only one or two exchanges or e-marketplaces for the golf industry.”



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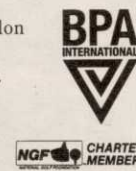
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Subscription Information
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MAILBAG

MACH 2 WORKS IN ROUGH

To the editor:

I’d like to correct some misinformation that appears in the July 2000 issue of *Golf Course News*.

In the article entitled, “Destructive beetle spreading fast through Northeast,” you reference comments by a golf course superintendent in Dover, N.H. The article says the superintendent does not use MACH 2 turf insecticide, manufactured by RohMid, on his golf course’s rough because the

product “is not recommended for unirrigated areas.”

In fact, MACH 2 is an excellent grub control product to use in such areas.

Nearly all grub insecticides, whether preventives or curatives, need to be eventually watered in to be effective. The same holds true for MACH 2. But because of the product’s soil stability, immediate irrigation is not required. By contrast, the label directions for Merit and

most curative products call for irrigation within 24 hours after application for optimum control. With MACH 2, we do recommend immediate irrigation when it is being used in curative applications up to the second stage.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide accurate information on MACH 2.

Sincerely,
Rich Kalik
RohMid Board

HATS OFF TO OLD BROCKWAY

To the editor:

I enjoyed the article in your August issue about the Old Brockway Course becoming certified by Audubon International. The course is a great track nestled in the Tahoe basin. As the superintendent at Old Brockway for the seasons of 1983-85, I have first-hand knowledge of the tremendous efforts Lane Lewis and his sister Leslie

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New courses outpace demand

Continued from previous page

It's not all gloom and doom for course owners, however. The macro-trends are favorable. Collectively, inflation-adjusted course revenues have doubled over the last 11 years from \$7 billion to \$14 billion. According to the NGF, one third of the increase (\$2.4 billion) came from new players, and two thirds (\$4.7 billion) have come from higher greens fees.

"Thus," the report says, "the growth in greens fees revenue has come mostly from real pricing increases on a per-round basis, and only to a much less extent from new players." But then comes the bad news: "The per capita spending increases experienced in the 1990s are likely not sustainable indefinitely."

The solution, of course, is to attract more new players to the game, and the good folks at NGF are ready with a plan.

To ensure a more prosperous future, the report states, the industry needs to see 100 million more rounds over the next decade – beyond the "natural" growth. Where will they come from? From the 41 million "high potential" people who would like to golf or who would like to play more often.

Working with the international management consulting firm McKinsey & Company, the NGF has come up with a five-step action plan that can be implemented at the individual course level. To wit:

- **Targeted programs.** Create a wider variety of programs designed to ease the entry and development of high-potential target groups (e.g., programs for women, mixed singles, parent/child and married couples.)

- **Tailored products.** Develop products that appeal to a broader spectrum of golfers and that ease the transition from ranges to courses (e.g., better utilization and marketing of existing par-3, executive, and nine-hole courses, and more and better practice facilities.)

- **Dynamic pricing.** Provide special pricing in much the same way as an airline. The golf product can be priced in many ways (e.g., by time of day, day of week, group discounts and frequent player programs) to create value for both customer and owner.

- **Skills training.** Make learning the game more fun and inviting. Golfers want to learn in a friendly, non-intimidating environment. Golf instruction must become more than just swing mechanics. It should encompass strategy, course management, short game, and other important aspects that a golfer must learn to become a genuinely committed player.

- **Enriched understanding of golf.** Provide a stronger connection to the game's traditions and values. An important part of the golf experience involves the history, traditions, etiquette and other nuances of the game about which committed players are so passionate.

"The golf industry is at a crossroads," the NGF report concludes. "We may continue to grow at a slow but steady rate, or we may take advantage of a very large and addressable opportunity to increase participation." ■

Coping with consolidation: a superintendent's strategy for success

Anthony L. Williams, CGCS

In the beginning, golf was simple. There was only one golf course. Therefore golf management was simple. There was only one way to do things, so no comparisons could be made.

After the success of the first golf course, many new courses were built that were similar in function but had very different goals. Some courses focused only on financial results, for example, while others focused more on playability and scenic design. The competition for players and ratings grew at a sizzling pace. The growth of the golf industry created an opportunity for corporations to begin operating groups of courses with unifying standards and goals. This strategy uses the synergy of bulk buying and standardized procedures to increase efficiency.



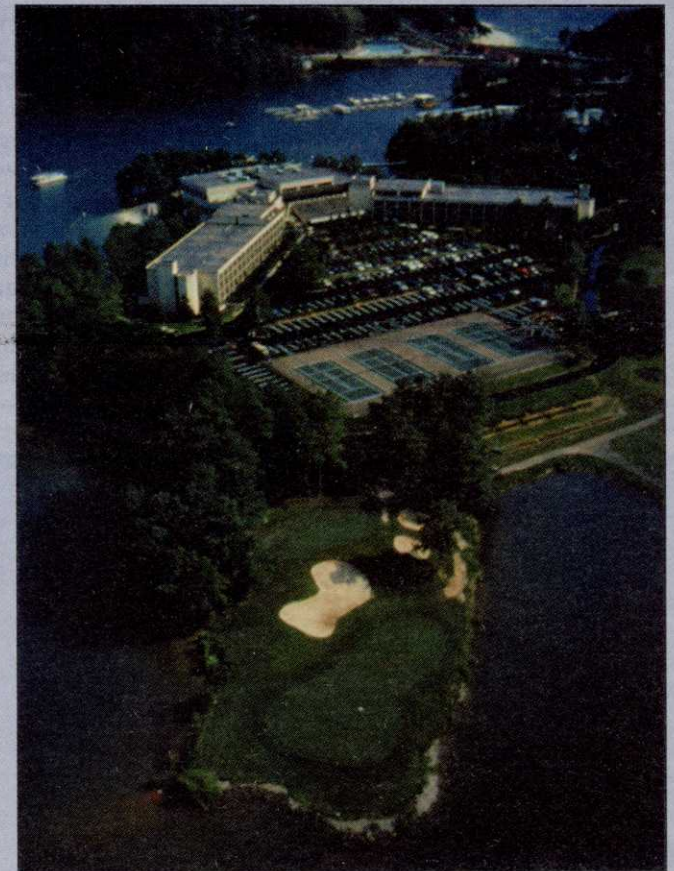
Anthony Williams

Many golf management companies use these concepts successfully. However, the superintendent of a newly acquired property often faces unfamiliar challenges. The fear of replacement, budget reviews and lengthy policy manuals all create stress. The superintendent must overcome this stress by aligning his goals with those of the management company. Succeeding in this situation is difficult, but can be very rewarding.

There are two primary goals a superintendent should focus upon during a management change at his property. The first is to fully understand the objectives of the new management company, and the second is to adjust the operations to best meet these new objectives.

TAKE PROACTIVE APPROACH

As superintendent, you must become proactive and accept the process of change. Soon after acquiring a property, representatives from the management company will arrive to assess the course and its management. These operational meetings are critical to the superintendent's future at the property. The superintendent must obtain the company's objectives for the property in these meetings and demonstrate the organization, work ethic and communication skills needed to achieve these objectives.

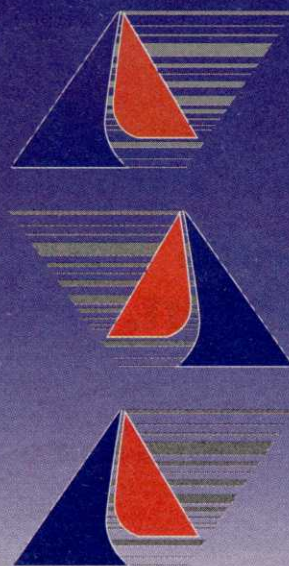


The 356-yard par-4 18th hole at PineIsle with the Renaissance PineIsle Resort Hotel in the background

As superintendent, you should meet as many representatives from the management company as possible. Use the telephone, fax and e-mail to share your property's needs with all levels of new management. Remember to present a professional image in all areas of contact. Ask direct questions about your role in the company. You must be willing to accept any criticism as a direct opportunity for improvement. If possible, acquire an action list that will note items that are of highest priority for completion and work on those items. The new owner will notice any self-directed shift towards their priorities. This will demonstrate a shared vision, which is the cornerstone of successful change.

Documentation and communication of your early efforts

Continued on page 8



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Coping with consolidation

Continued from page 7

will greatly influence a management company's perception of you and your crew. Ask for all mission statements and policy manuals to be made available to your entire staff. Make any changes necessary to align your current procedures to the information provided. Although this is not an easy task, it is necessary to help calm any fears you or your staff may have about the new operating procedures.

NEW OPPORTUNITIES

We have all heard stories of superintendents being

dismissed without having an opportunity to change, but in most cases a well-educated, hard working superintendent is a valuable asset. The accomplishments of a professional golf course superintendent are always the result of dedication and perseverance. If you know what is expected and deliver quality results, your services will always be in demand.

Golf management companies are a growing force in the industry, and superintendents must adapt to the unique challenges this trend will bring. A golf management company can offer the superintendent structure, promotions and increased recognition.

I have been fortunate to work at the same property for 14

years under three different owners, six general managers and three directors of golf. As director of grounds for the Renaissance Pineisle Resort, I have been exposed to tremendous professional opportunities within the Marriott Golf family. I have great compassion for those who have had negative experiences with golf management companies, and I hope the strategies I have suggested will help others find success in their own situations. ■

Anthony L. Williams is superintendent at Renaissance Pineisle Resort. This article first appeared in "Through the Green," published by the Georgia Golf Course Superintendents Association.

MAILBAG

Old Brockway

Continued from page 6

have gone through to get their course certified. This is a feather in their cap. The Tahoe basin has a short season, and environmental restrictions that few other superintendents have to adhere to.

I take my hat off to the whole staff at Old Brockway for their efforts. It took a great amount of work by a lot of people and agencies to get them their certification requirements fulfilled. Again, to Lane and his staff, keep Tahoe blue, and the greens true.

Sincerely,
Gary M. Puckett
Golf operations manager
Brevard County, Fla.

We want to hear from you

Letters to the editor are an integral part of *GCN*, so let your voice be heard. Send all correspondence to:

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Anderson in GCSAA's chairman's club

LAWRENCE, Kan. — Golf course developer and real estate investor Lyle Anderson has pledged to the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America (GCSAA) Foundation. The pledge is earmarked for the foundation's \$5-million "Investing in the Beauty of Golf" endowment campaign and puts Anderson in the "chairman's club," which recognizes contributions of \$25,000 to \$50,000.

"The success I've enjoyed in developing golf course properties has been supported in many ways by golf course superintendents," Anderson said. "The association and its foundation are valued partners to the game and business of golf."

The GCSAA Foundation enhances golf by funding applied research and advanced education in course management. Since its inception in 1955, the foundation has provided more than \$1 million in research support, and has funded more than 1,000 scholarships.

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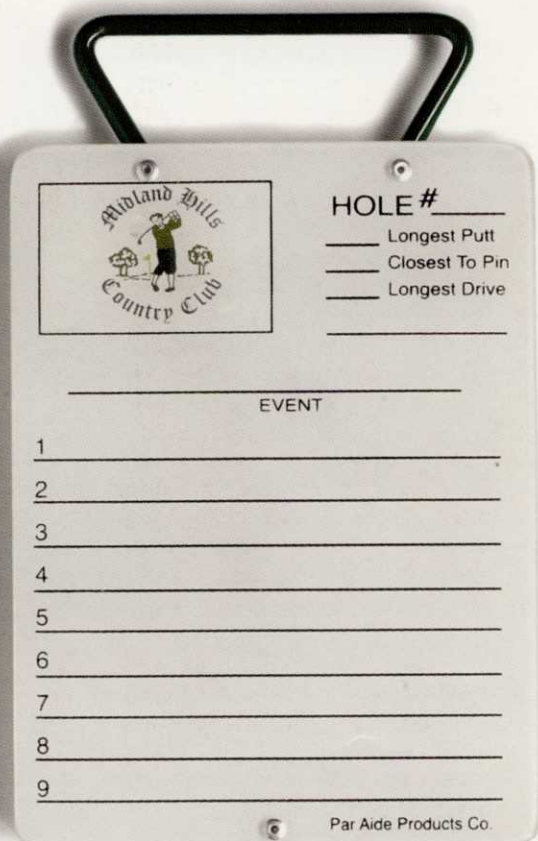
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HURT IT.**

**TEARS OF JOY
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front



back

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- Available in two styles: generic or customized with course logo
- Highly visible on the course
- Extremely sturdy construction
- Strong polycarbonate writing surface is virtually indestructible
- Refillable grease pen is permanently attached to back of proximity markers; loose pen supplied with contest indicators
- Writes on wet or dry surface and will not wash off. Just wipe clean.

PROXIMITY MARKERS (Shown)

- Proximity Marker identifies best shot

CONTEST INDICATORS

- Contest Indicator stands at the tee announcing the contest



EVER-WHITE™ CUP

New innovative aluminum cup design

- Never needs painting because there's no paint to chip
- Plastic, replaceable bright white cup sleeve for use with specially designed aluminum cup
- Cup will stay bright white
- Sleeve is easy to install and remove, but will stay tight in cup during play
- Patent pending

RECYCLED PLASTIC MARKERS AND STAKES

- 1-1/2" x 1-1/2" recycled plastic body
- Stout 5/16" stainless steel spike, or pointed plastic tip
- Available in a variety of lengths
- Fade resistant, never need painting
- And, they float!

A. HAZARD MARKERS

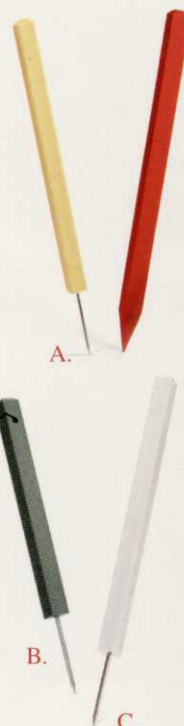
- Choose yellow or red

B. ROPE STAKES

- Easy-to-open slot for stringing rope
- Choose white or hunter green

C. OUT OF BOUNDS MARKERS

- White only





BRIEFS

BEYERS TAKES OVER AT RED HAWK

SCOTTSDALE, Ariz. — Western Golf Properties (WGP) has promoted Timothy J. Beyers to course superintendent at Red Hawk Ridge GC, in Castle Rock, Colo. Prior to joining WGP, Beyers was assistant superintendent at Arrowhead GC, in Littleton, Colo.

John Carson, director of operations for WGP, said Beyers has "the knowledge and determination needed to maintain the immaculate course conditioning and uphold the reputation that Red Hawk Ridge has quickly established in the Colorado golf market." The course, an 18-hole layout designed by Jim Engh, features bluegrass fairways, dramatic elevation changes and superb views of the Rockies.

Beyers is currently attending Front Range Community College in Colorado, studying urban horticulture.

ENVIRONMENTAL ENTRIES DUE

LAWRENCE, Kan. — Entries are due Oct. 2 for the ninth annual Environmental Steward Awards, which recognize superintendents and golf courses for their work towards a clean environment. The awards are sponsored by Novartis Turf and Ornamental Products, Rain Bird, Textron Golf & Turf, and Pursell Technologies. Applications are available on the the GCSAA web site or from the GCSAA service center at 800-472-7878.

GCSAA RECEIVES SCHOLARSHIP PLEDGE

WAYZATA, Minn. — The Trans-Mississippi Golf Association, based here, recently signed a three-year agreement to fund \$8,000 in scholarships for the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America's (GCSAA) Footsteps on the Green program. The scholarship program provides aid to the children and grandchildren of GCSAA members.

Eligibility is limited to full-time college students studying for careers as course superintendents. Applicants are evaluated based on academic achievement, extracurricular activities, and community involvement, which may include membership in one of GCSAA's 50 student chapters.

The scholarships range from \$3,500 to \$500, and the awards are administered by the GCSAA Foundation.



Scientists make breakthrough in drought-resistant tall fescue

By JAY FINEGAN

GRIFFIN, Ga. — University of Georgia turfgrass scientists have developed a new drought-resistant strain of fescue that promises to be a boon to golf courses. The so-called Southeast Tall Fescue is the first release to emerge from the university's fescue breeding program, started in 1992. The seed is expected to be marketed by Landmark Seed Co. and available sometime next year.

Ronny Duncan, Ph.D., professor of breeding and stress physiology in the department of crop and soil sciences, headed up the painstaking development project. His search for grass samples that could be used in the experimentation took him to South America, Africa, the Bahamas and all over Georgia.

Duncan's colleague in the fescue breakthrough, Bob Carrow, Ph.D., professor of turfgrass science, said the new variety will likely see duty on golf courses as rough and fairway framing and on clubhouse grounds. He said recommended mowing heights — two inches in southern



climates, an inch and a half in more moderate regions — would bar fairway use.

When the breeding program began, the goal was to develop turf-type tall fescues with the attributes necessary to persist under Georgia conditions. The primary goal was to come up with a fescue that could withstand drought, acid soil complex, and high soil temperatures, while generating enough carbohydrates — plant food produced by photosynthesis — to maintain strong roots during hot summer months. Additionally, the scientists sought a fescue strain with good turf quality, in shoot density, color and growth rate, and which would exhibit pest-resistant qualities and strong seed production.

BOOT CAMP FOR PLANTS

It took eight years, but finally Duncan and Carrow produced a strain, through natural selection, that met the criteria. "Southeast Tall Fescue," Carrow said, "is very, very drought resistant."

The scientists subjected their various experimental strains to severe stress and water deprivation during a "plant boot camp" that killed between 95 and 99 percent of them. "That's the only way you can identify the ones that have super

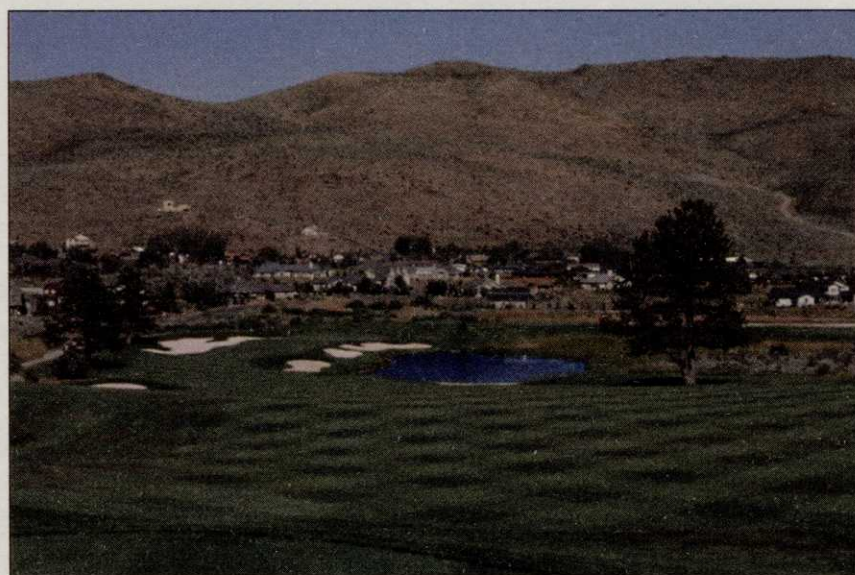
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Supers rate Audubon program highly

SELKIRK, N.Y. — A survey by Audubon International has found that taking part in the Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary Program for golf courses (ACSP) brings verifiable environmental benefits. When queried on a number of measures to improve wildlife habitat, protect water quality and reduce chemical use, ACSP members — primarily course superintendents — reported significant improvements in their environmental management practices. They also reported that they sacrificed little if anything in terms of playing quality or golfer satisfaction.

Audubon International launched the ACSP in 1991, in conjunction with the U.S. Golf Association, as an environmental education program designed to help golf courses enhance and protect wildlife habitat and natural resources. Today, 2,140 courses in the United States are enrolled in the program, and

Continued on page 13



The par-4 fourth hole at Montreux Golf and Country Club, site of the Reno Tahoe Open

At Montreux, Heinricks thrives on annual Reno Tahoe Open

By DOUG SAUNDERS

RENO, Nev. — The long, hot, sunny days of Nevada summer never come quickly enough for Doug Heinricks, head superintendent here at Montreux Golf and Country Club.

The Iowa native is in his second year caring for the bentgrass fairways of this massive Jack Nicklaus-designed golf course on the eastern slope of Mount Rose, just south of Reno — "The Biggest Little City in the World." His challenge is nurturing lush, consistent fairways and greens, not only for the discerning members of this private facility, but also for the recently held Reno Tahoe Open, a PGA Tour event.

"I love it when the warm weather sets in, because I need to have my soil temperatures come up in order to stimulate microbial activity and root growth," he said. "The soil at the base of the mountains is decomposed granite, which makes it easily compacted and hard to penetrate. Irrigation water seems to run off rather than soak in. But it is a challenge that I am glad to take on just to be in this region."

Montreux opened in 1997 in the midst of a golf construction boom in these parts. More than 140 holes have been built in four years. Montreux has established itself as the premier private club on the eastern slope of the

Continued on page 12

ISTRC adds new greens unit

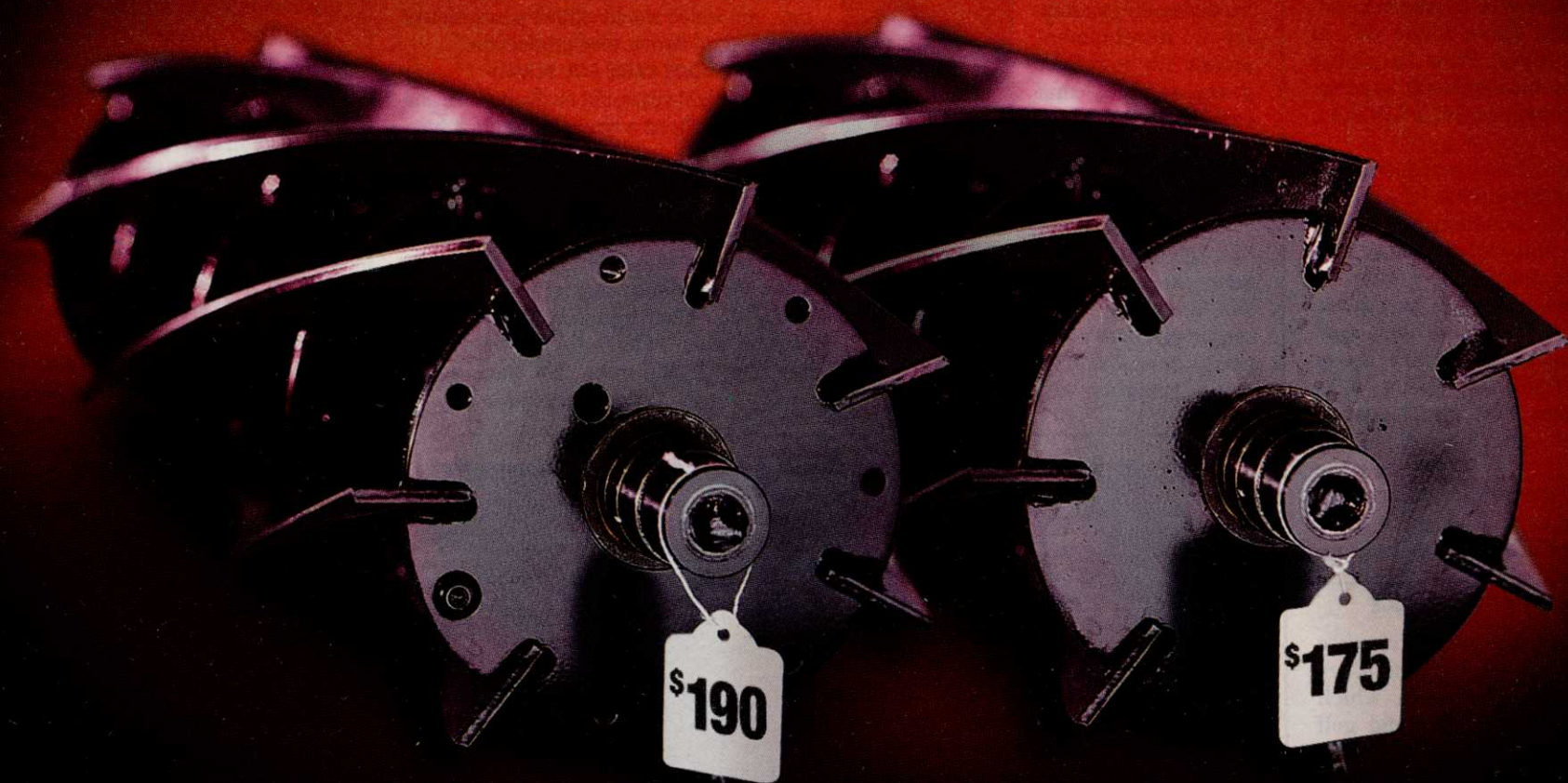
OLATHE, Kan. — International Sports Turf Research Center (ISTRC), based here near Kansas City, recently created a second company, ISTRC NML, to provide physical properties analysis for the construction and reconstruction of greens.

ISTRC developed the first ISTRC system of physical properties analysis mainly for existing golf course greens. Their system of undisturbed core analysis has produced data from thousands of cores that has resulted in the guidelines for new bent and Bermuda grasses that refine U.S. Golf Association (USGA) specs.

ISTRC NML (New Mix Lab) was created to conduct tests required to meet USGA Green Section guidelines for new construction and reconstruction of greens. ISTRC NML qualifies for USGA recommendation by meeting the criteria and earning the accreditation of the American Association for Laboratory Accreditation (A2LA).

Dave Doherty, founder of both companies, said that ISTRC NML is a natural extension of the firm's capabilities. "Imagine the benefits of the data that we have already compiled when applied to New Mix Lab technologies. As the only company with two labs, one for existing greens and one for new construction, we have combined an operation that will be an invaluable asset to the new course from inception through maturity," he said. "We're excited about all that we can offer our clients today."

In 1990, Doherty and Leon Howard, who wrote the original USGA specs, began to monitor sand-based greens, a task which no one had then bothered to do. "When we first started this company, we were really just out to grow grass on athletic fields for kids," Doherty said. "But now we do about 40 of the top 100 courses in the country."



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GENUINE PARTS

Tools of the Trade...at Ralph Kepple's East Lake Golf Club

ATLANTA — You'd think Ralph Kepple would be nervous. After all, he's got 30 of the world's best golfers coming here to East Lake Golf Club on October 30 for the PGA Tour Championship. But Kepple is taking it in stride. His club hosted the same event in 1998, and the superintendent knows exactly what to expect.

"Starting in mid-September, one company comes in to build scaffolding, and one starts building tent structures for corporate hospitality," he said. "They will be building that stuff right up til the first day of the tournament. And the television companies will come in a couple of weeks prior to the event and start building their towers. It's real hectic for a while, but I'm looking forward to it. Right now, we're doing a lot of extra fertilizing in the roughs, leveling heads and just trying to get everything as smooth as we can."

Kepple has been here for eight years, following a stint at Settindown Creek Golf Club in Roswell, Ga. The private East Lake course opened in 1906, and underwent a Donald Ross redesign in 1913. "We had a major renovation here

in 1994, with Rees Jones, bringing it back to the Ross design, and that generated a lot of publicity," Kepple said.

The PGA Tour Championship brings in the year's top 30 money winners. "It's not considered a major," Kepple said, "but it's definitely major money, and the field is great."

Greens Mowers: 9 John Deere 220A, 6 Toro GM 500

Tee Mowers: 3 Toro 1600

Fairway Mowers: 4 John Deere 3235A

Rough Mowers: 1 Bush Hog TDM-11,

1 John Deere 1145, 3 John Deere 2653A

Riding Bunker Rake: 1 John Deere 1200A

Turf Utility Vehicles: 5 John Deere ProGator, 2 Toro 3200 Workman

Verti-cut Reels: 1 Ryan Mataway, 1 Graden

Aerifiers: 1 John Deere 1000, 1 John Deere 1500, 1 Toro Walker

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Tournament Speed Rollers: 2 Salsco

Reel Grinder: Express Dual

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Irrigation Pump Station: Flowtronex PSI 1250 GPM V.F.D.

Irrigation System: Toro Osmac: SitePro

Golf Car Fleet: ClubCar (6 gas, 6 electric)



Kepple's John Deere 4600 tractor with AgriMetal blower

Flagsticks: Standard, 8' Tournament (black & white British stripe)

Computer & Accessories: Microstar (Toro) SitePro, Windows 95

Primary herbicide: Ronstar

Primary pesticide: Scimitar

Primary fungicide: Heritage (greens), Prostar (fairways)

Primary slow-release fertilizer:

IBDU (greens), SCU (fairways)

Cannot Live Without: Faith in God

Oldest Piece of Equipment: 1974

John Deere 1250 Tractor

Total square footage of maintenance building(s): 17,000 sq.ft.

Annual rounds of golf: 20,000

Normal green speed: 10'

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Tahoe Reno

Continued from page 9

Sierra. But with so many new courses in the region, a strong identity for the club was essential to develop the prestige that leads to strong sales of memberships and house lots.

When the PGA Tour began to look for a new event to fill the void of the August date that coincided with the NEC World Series of Golf, Reno entered the competition against such cities as St. Louis, Seattle and Portland, Ore.

To some, Reno was a surprise choice over cities that had hosted major championships in the past. Tour officials were satisfied that Reno, which hosted a PGA Event in the 1940s and a Senior Tour stop in the early '80s, could once again fill the need, as well as come up with the required \$2-million franchise fee.

BENTGRASS IN THE SNOW

The success of Nicklaus's Castle Pines Country Club in Colorado, which also hosts an annual PGA Tour event, led the designer to the choice of bentgrass for the Montreux course. The decision promoted a lot of consternation from local superintendents. This region sees plenty of weather cold enough to hinder the warm soil temperatures that bentgrass needs to thrive.

Doug Heinrichs came to Montreux in January 1999 after working nine years in the Palm Springs area. The 32-year-old Iowa State grad has been working around golf courses since he was 15. "When the Montreux opportunity presented itself, I was excited to come to a mountain region just to be able to enjoy seasonal weather again," he said.

In Palm Springs the weather pattern is warm, hot and hotter. Around Reno, on the other hand, the thermometer can shoot into the high 90s during summer, but winter temperatures dip into the 30s. Snow is not unusual in February, but Heinrichs still works to keep the course open year-round. He combats the cold and compaction by doing an early aerification and closely monitoring his watering.

"We have bentgrass fairways but bluegrass rough," he said. "I have to really control my irrigation patterns to get a consistent look to the course. In the end, though, it is the warm days, especially warm days early in the spring, that are my best friend."

SPECTACULAR LAYOUT

Montreux is a huge golf course, with over 45 acres of fairways. Located at 5,000 feet at the base of statuesque Mount Rose, the bold layout shares two dis-

tinct landscapes – rolling high-desert land, and thick pine forests. Nicklaus used the best of both terrains to create a stunning course that measures 7,552 yards from the tips and features dramatic elevation changes. The 17th hole alone features a 130-foot drop from the tee to the slender fairway below.

Heinrichs and his summer-time staff of 35 endeavor to keep the course in tournament shape at

all times. This plan pays off when he sets about preparing the course for the annual PGA Tour event, where the most critical things are consistent lies on the fairways, the condition of bunkers and green speeds.

Heinrichs felt that his course provided a fair test last year during its inaugural Tour run. PGA green specs were easily met, as Heinrichs usually mows his greens lower than the Tour re-

quires.

"I mow during the summer at 120/1000 and raise up to 125/1000 [1/8 inch] for the event," he said. "We have the green speeds stimping at 10 in advance of the tournament, and with double mowing we get the speed up to 10.6. We work so hard to get the course ready for the PGA Tour that you hope all of your effort is appreciated."


Still, he would not trade the

experience for anything. "Few superintendents get the chance to host a Tour event, with all the energy and excitement that surrounds it," Heinrichs said. "Even fewer have the opportunity to work on a course that is willing to spend the money necessary to provide that type of conditioning every day for its membership. I'm fortunate to be here at Montreux and have that chance." ■



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TRIM MOWER.

UNTIL NOW THERE WASN'T ONE.

A man wearing a yellow shirt and a cap is operating a red Toro Groundsmaster 3500-D rotary trim mower on a golf course. The mower is red with black tires and a black steering wheel. The word "TORO" is visible on the steering wheel, and "SIDEWINDER" is written on the side of the mower. The background shows a green golf course with a brown sand trap in the distance.

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cut of the new Toro
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- Superb trimming capabilities and the ability to vary tire tracking are two benefits of the Sidewinder™ cutting system, which allows decks to slide 12" left or right of center (24" full travel).
- Unequalled traction thanks to the patented Series/Parallel™ 3-wheel drive traction system.
- Attractive striping is effortless with rear rollers.
- Operator comfort is ensured by power steering, tilt steering and adjustable seat.



TORO

Salmon return to Oregon stream that meanders through 27 holes

WELCHES, Ore. — Thanks to The Resort at The Mountain's "Wee Burn" stream restoration project, fish are now being seen in parts of the stream and ponds that have been inaccessible since 1928, and two crops of wild coho salmon and steelhead trout smolts that spawned in the new

habitat have migrated to the open sea. The Wee Burn wanders through the resort's 27 holes of golf, set at the western base of Mt. Hood.

The Wee Burn (Scottish for small stream), which runs through The Resort's Three Nines golf course, is a minor



Workers restoring Wee Burn

tributary of the Salmon River, a federally designated "wild and scenic river," and is part of the Sandy River Watershed. Since 1995, The Resort has been working closely with the U.S. Forest Service, Mt. Hood National Forest, WolfTree, Trout Unlimited, and others to restore wild fish habitat in the stream. In addition to volunteer work and grants from the

Oregon Governor's Watershed Enhancement Board and the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, The Resort has invested over \$200,000 in the project.

"We knew the Wee Burn had the potential to provide excellent fish habitat, and we're encouraged to see the juvenile fish using the prime habitat in the ponds and upper stream

Continued on page 14

INTRODUCING THE NEW TORO GROUNDMASTER® 3500-D.

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The Sidewinder System allows you to vary tire tracking or trim embanked areas.

TORO®

Audubon survey

Continued from page 9

219 have achieved designation as Certified Audubon Cooperative Sanctuaries by implementing and documenting a full slate of conservation activities.

"As we move into our 10th year of the program, we wanted to quantify the results of program participation," said Larry Woolbright, Ph.D., Audubon International's director of research, who spearheaded the survey. "Do courses that participate achieve the goal of enhancing and protecting the environment? The survey gives us some hard numbers about how members have improved on a variety of environmental fronts."

QUANTIFIABLE RESULTS

For example, members reported that, on average, acres devoted to providing wildlife habitat jumped from 40 to 70 per course — a 75-percent increase. Also 79 percent of ACSP members decreased the amount of managed turfgrass, and 64 percent now monitor wildlife activity, up from 16 percent beforehand.

Another key environmental priority of the ACSP is helping members to reduce the use of pesticides and fertilizers, and to safely use, store, and handle chemicals. Survey results show that golf courses have been able to achieve that goal without sacrificing playing quality. In fact, 86 percent reduced pesticide use and 92 percent reported using pesticides with a lower toxicity level since joining the program. Also, 84 percent increased the amount of slow-release fertilizers they used.

ACSP members said that playing conditions and golfer satisfaction remained the same or improved for 99 percent of ACSP courses. Sixty-four percent of participants also reported that their job satisfaction improved after joining the program.

"Golf course superintendents can be excellent stewards of the environment," said Ronald Dodson, Audubon International's president and CEO. "Not only are they contributing to improved quality on the course, they are also spreading the word about environmental responsibility." ■

Audubon certifies Leatherstocking

COOPERSTOWN, N.Y. – Audubon International has officially designated the Leatherstocking Golf Course at the Otesaga Resort here a Certified Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary under its Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary System (ACSS), a program endorsed by the U.S. Golf Association.

Designed by Devereux Emmet in 1909, the classic 18-hole championship Leatherstocking Golf Course, which sweeps along the western shore of Lake Otesaga, is considered one of the most scenic courses in the nation. It holds a four-diamond rating from *Golf Digest* for its challenging layout and well-protected greens.

Recently renovated at a cost of more than \$1 million, the Leatherstocking Golf Course joined the ACSS program in 1996. Its participation is consistent with the overall commitment of the surrounding Cooperstown community to protecting its natural legacy.

Leatherstocking is one of only 11 courses in New York State to receive the Audubon International honor, along with other such courses as the Winged Foot



Golfer gets a lesson at Leatherstocking

Golf Club in Mamaroneck and the Westchester Country Club in Rye.

"Gaining certification is not a simple process. Course superintendent Bernard Banas and his staff were completely dedicated to this program for four years, and they deserve a lot of credit," said Eric Straus, president of the Leatherstocking Corp., which owns the course.

"In addition to being one of the prettiest courses you'll ever play, Leatherstocking is home to a variety of indigenous wildlife, including foxes, deer and the Eastern bluebird," said Dan Spooner, director of golf. "We are proud that we can maintain a safe sanctuary for the animals while providing an enjoyable and challenging golf experience."

Fescue breakthrough

Continued from page 9

tolerance," said Carrow.

For test samples, Duncan collected any tall fescue plants he could find growing within six inches of a paved highway. "That would bring a high heat load to the grass," Carrow said. "Any tall fescue that survived in conditions like that had to produce enough carbohydrates to do so. With that germ plasm base, plus the strains that survived intensive screening, we had enough to begin crossing."

The cross-strains went through another boot camp, which killed at least 95 percent of them. Then Duncan took the top one to five percent and started crossing those, subjecting them to even more rigorous conditions.

"To put on even greater stress," Carrow said, "once he got those initial crosses, he scalped them with a mower to remove all the green tissue, which put a further strain on the carbohydrates. Under these extreme conditions, the heartier plants will turn on their genetic capability to withstand the stresses."

The scientists also made the grass more frugal. Grass usually drinks all the water it can at one time, growing in spurts that can't be maintained. With Southeast Tall Fescue, "even though the water is there in the soil, the grass doesn't use any more than it needs," Carrow said. ■

Salmon

Continued from page 13

for the first time in 70 years," said Ed Hopper, owner of the resort.

The Wee Burn has always had some coho and steelhead in it, but the best spawning portions, including ponds, were inaccessible to fish. A significant amount of work has been done, including adding wetland and alcoves to slow the stream down, restoring some of the stream's natural meander, adding shade plants and trees, adding in-stream structures for spawning and resting areas, and building ladders to allow fish access to the upper ponds on the stream. While most of the work is complete, much is still being done by the resort and its partners to improve, maintain and monitor the changes.

"The Wee Burn's habitat has been improved fourfold, and we expect to see an increase in fish populations in the coming years," said Forest Service fisheries biologist Chris Rossel. "To bring back fish stocks to a level of being delisted from the federal endangered and threatened species list, fish habitat on private lands has to improve. This project is a great example of private and public entities working together to ensure successful stream restoration on private lands." ■

Southern Hills

Continued from page 1

of Southern Hills overcame unforeseen obstacles that might have led less committed individuals to tell the U.S. Golf Association (USGA) to look elsewhere for a site to stage its premier annual event.

VANDALS SPARKED RESTORATION

Already faced with considerable work in order to bring Southern Hills up to the USGA Open specifications, the workers at the course were dealt a blow when vandals seriously damaged nine greens in June of 1999. The vandalism was such that the putting surfaces had to be closed and regrassed.

"The club's board of governors saw what happened as an opportunity to undertake extensive restoration work," said Szkliński, who came to Southern Hills in 1998 from Desert Highlands, in Scottsdale, Ariz.

"My initial reaction to the vandalism was one of anger and disappointment," he said. "I knew after a week of watching how the greens would react that we would have to go through the process of regrassing. But I said to myself that we were going to look at this as an opportunity."

In addition to regrassing all the course's greens, work was done to upgrade the club's irrigation system, bunkers were rebuilt, the tall oak and pecan trees that form canopies over the sides of many fairways were trimmed, and longer championship tees built. It was decided that to insure the consistency of the course's putting surfaces the nine greens not affected by the vandalism would also be regrassed.

"The club was established in 1936," said Szkliński, "and we get some pretty heavy thunderstorms during the summer. Erosion over the years can change the face of bunkers and there can be encroachment toward the greens. It's

minute, but on an annual basis it adds up. We took this opportunity to restore the course to its original layout."

Noted golf course architect Keith Foster was hired to assist with the renovations.

"Every time Keith came to the front gate of the club he checked his ego," Szkliński said. "This is a Maxwell course and we needed to continue to be a pure Maxwell design. Keith did a wonderful job."

10-MONTH COURSE SHUTDOWN

In addition to the course maintenance staff, Landscapes Unlimited, of Lincoln, Neb., was hired to help undertake the work. Szkliński maintains a staff of around 35, but as many as 80 to 90 people were working on the restoration project on a daily basis.

The course had to be closed for 10 months, a big sacrifice by the members. "They deserve enormous amounts of praise," Szkliński said. "It was a hard deal for them to give up their club for 10 months to allow the work to be done. They were the ones who endured the most inconvenience."

Szkliński and the Southern Hills staff was thrown another curve ball when the club's maintenance shed was destroyed by an electrical fire in January of this year. A new building had to be constructed. "Once again the club rose to the occasion after the fire, and now we have a new building, which serves all our needs," he said.

Tim Moraghan of the USGA's rules and competition committee, which oversees the preparing of a golf course for a major championship and issues a set of guidelines for clubs to follow to that end, said there was never a thought of moving the 2001 Open.

"We were out there for three or four days after the vandalism, reviewing our options," said Moraghan. "We assured them that the Open was going to be

Continued on next page

GOLF COURSE NEWS

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Great Southwest GC closes for regrassing

ARLINGTON, Tex. – Great Southwest Golf Club, in Grand Prairie, in the Dallas-Ft. Worth area, will be closed for a several months to install new grasses expected to better withstand Texas weather, the *Arlington Morning News* reported. Plans call for installation of Tifway 419 bermudagrass on the fairways, officials said. The rye grass had

been dying out.

Members are upset and, at the same time, understanding. "I sympathize with the members. But this is a big commitment by the company to spend \$1 million and make this one of the best courses in Texas," said club pro and general manager Chip Graham.

Club members were notified

about the closure in a letter earlier this summer. It described how the management team was going to handle the conversion of the current bentgrass greens to a hybrid bermudagrass.

The change was deemed necessary because the humidity and rains had caused *pythium* to attack the greens.

Great Southwest members will be able to play other courses in the ownership group, including Diamond Oaks, Woodhaven, Oakridge, Eldorado, Los Rios and Thorntree.

"Bentgrass is a superb putting surface," club member Lou Duran said. "But they've had a lot of trouble with it [keeping it growing in the Texas heat]. The Champions or Tif Eagle is

a positive way to go. Great Southwest could be a Colonial-type course. It's that kind of layout. I'm looking at this as a positive."

Longtime member Mo Lambert said the club should have made the move a year earlier. "For me, I don't know if it's just getting older or what, but the summers keep getting hotter and dryer every year," he said.

Southern Hills

Continued from previous page

played at Southern Hills and they stepped up to the plate. What we want is not only for a course to be in top shape for the Open, but also that any work done will benefit the members 15 to 20 years down the road."

The USGA's course preparation memo covers a wide range of issues, from turfgrass conditions and the length of the rough to the placements of grandstands and wiring. There is little flexibility in the USGA's edicts, save for the speed of the greens.

"The course preparation memo is firm," said Moraghan. "We say this is how we want the course set up for the national championship. The only issue that is flexible is green speed. It's very difficult to set a prescribed number because you don't know until the week of the event what the weather conditions will be. I'll ask John what he thinks he can give us, and we'll settle on a number."

PRE-TOURNAMENT PREP

Moraghan said the USGA was impressed with the facelift at Southern Hills.

"The golf course superintendent is the most underrated player in the whole picture," he said. "John was new to Southern Hills and had to get the course ready on short notice. Throw in the vandalism to the greens and losing his maintenance building and he had to do a remarkable job. It's going to be a great Open."

The summer weather in the Tulsa area is usually hot and dry, which demands that Southern Hills be extensively watered. The new irrigation system will be instrumental in keeping the course in top condition throughout the summer.

Prior to the Open and throughout the tournament, Szklinski will add part-time staff and will welcome volunteers to help with course maintenance.

"Once we get close to the Open there will be a very high sense of urgency and intensity," he said. "I'm sure I'll have some butterflies. But I feel what we've been through has been a pretty good preparation for what we need to be like during the tournament." ■

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FALL CLEAN UP

Supers battle debris, weather and labor shortages to prep for winter

By MEGHAN FOLEY

For superintendents from Maine to the Northwest, fall cleanup to prepare for winter is always an important process. After all, what is done in the fall triggers the way a course greens up in the spring. Autumnal applications of snow-mold fungicides, fertilizers and topdressing, and

overall course aerification, must occur in a short span of time before the weather changes.

For Jim Hodge, at Val Halla Golf Course in Cumberland, Maine, cleaning up in the autumn requires a great deal of attention. The scattered leaves, branches and pine needles of a typical New England fall keep

him busy down to the very last week in November.

"We use everything from a small sweeper and a backpack blower to a walk-behind push blower and a big riding blower to clear the pine needles and leaves off the course," said Hodge. "For the entire month of September, we mow the fairways

and the greens nonstop."

Michael Foster, superintendent at Province Lake in South Effingham, N.H., would agree. "In the fall, we have so much hand-raking and picking that needs to be done," he said. "We have to clear pine needles and leaves on a daily basis because we have a lot of both evergreen

and maple oak trees on the course. Here, we rely heavily on manpower."

Foster focuses largely on aerification of the whole course throughout the New Hampshire autumn, altering his usual maintenance routine. "In the fall, we begin to change our fertilizer schedule so that we can do a thorough job of aerification," he said. "We try to go 2:1 of potassium to nitrogen. We also apply a light topdressing."

In Post Falls, Idaho, where Lonnie Aller is superintendent of Highlands Golf and Country Club, preparations for a mild fall begin in the third week of September. Blowing leaves and needles off the course occupies much of Aller's time, but for him, the most important thing is mowing the grasses until they are dormant to make sure that they are not shaggy going into the winter.

"We have a small blower that we use to consolidate the pine needles around the tees and greens, which is a good deal of

"Our lack of labor when the fall comes around plays a big factor in the daily maintenance of the golf course."

— Jim Hodge

the cleaning that we do," Aller said. "Then we use a vacuum to sweep the fairways and the roughs. We continue mowing right until the very end of November so the grass isn't the least bit shaggy for the winter. Aerification of fairways and greens is also important in the fall."

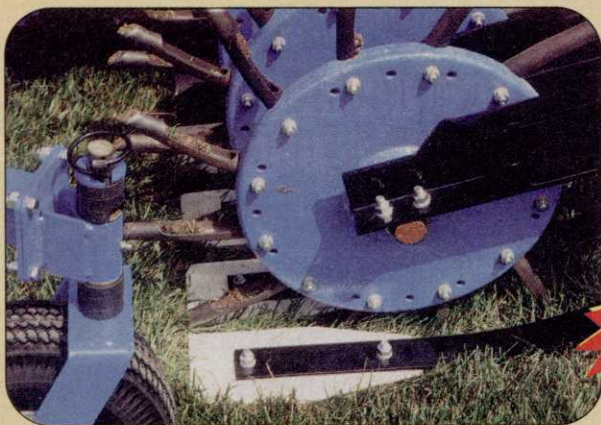
THE SNOW-MOLD BELT

In the Rockies, superintendents have different methods for making sure that their courses are properly cleared in the fall. For Jim Myers at Vail Golf Club, in Vail, Colo., keeping the course clear doesn't involve quite so much. "We don't have a whole lot on the course except for aspen trees, so we do a relatively small amount of leaf blowing — not like those guys in New England," he explained.

Myers is mostly concerned with the coming snow. "I always pay close attention to aerification and snow-mold control," he said. "Once the grass goes dormant, everything has to be mowed at the proper height so that a better root system can exist in the winter. With a stronger root system, plants have the chance to store more carbohydrates, which in turn allows them to survive a brutal winter."

Continued on page 18

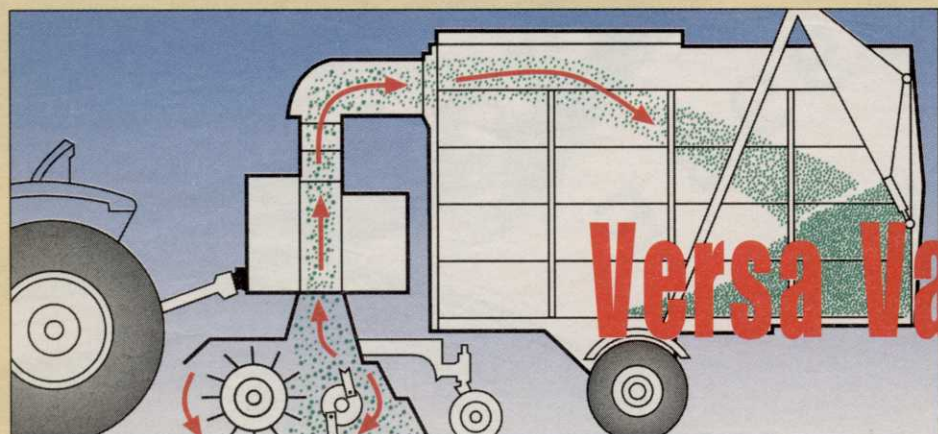
GOLF COURSE NEWS



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John Deere's TC125 turf collection system

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The John Deere TC125 turf collection system is a tow-behind attachment that allows one person to pick up and dump turf debris, such as aeration cores, sand, clippings, leaves or thatch. The TC125 covers a swath 48 inches wide and has a hopper capacity of 25 cubic feet. With a brush speed of 500-600 rpm, an average-size green can be cleared in about 15 minutes. The TC125 is designed to be towed behind either a heavy-duty utility vehicle equipped with hydraulics or a compact utility tractor with a selective control valve. An offset towing feature, adjustable from the operator's seat, allows the unit to be towed either directly behind or offset to the left side of the vehicle. Brush aggressiveness and flotation are controlled by a 6-inch diameter, full-width roller located directly behind the rotary brush. The roller height can be adjusted for turf conditions and brush wear. A hydraulic-powered lift cylinder makes for easy dumping. For more information, contact: John Deere Inquiry Department, P.O. Box 12217, Research Triangle Park, N.C. 27709.

Tornado blows debris

The F8 Tornado blower from MTD Pro is powered by an 8-hp Briggs and Stratton Industrial Plus engine which generates 175 mph air speed and 2500 CFM air volume. The Tornado also offers the following features: impeller blades cast from heat-treated, aviation-grade magnesium, a built-in deflector, and 11-inch by four-inch pneumatic tires for easy rolling. The blower meets OSHA Noise-Level Requirements. For



The MTD F8 Tornado

more information, contact 330-225-9133, or www.mtdpro.com.

Hog mows it down

Excel Industries introduces the Hustler Hog, a mower ideally suited for places that are mown only once or twice a year. The Hog features a 48-inch single-blade deck that can cut anything it can bend over. The zero-discharge deck is constructed for extra heavy-duty operation and has reinforced side walls. The 5/16-inch-thick blade has swinging blade tips for added safety and a hazard-jumper center section. The Hog also features H-Bar Steering. This easy-to-operate concept resembles motorcycle steering, with a forward twist to move forward



The 48-inch, zero-discharge Hustler Hog and a backward twist for reverse. For more information, contact 1-800-395-4757.



The Cushman 705 sweeper

Cushman 705 sweeper tackles turf clean up

The new Cushman 705 tow-behind sweeper is designed for quick cleanup of aeration cores, leaves, sand, needles, branches and grass clippings on turf or hard surfaces. The unit uses hydraulically powered brushes to quietly pick up almost anything on turf, sidewalks, cart paths and parking lots. Since the Cushman 705 Sweeper doesn't have an engine to produce noise, it can be used throughout the day with minimal disturbance to golfers, bystanders and residential areas. All sweeper functions, including brush engagement, brush

height adjustment, flap adjustment and unloading, can be controlled from the operator's seat. A dual-pivot, pick-up head and weight transfer system are utilized to maintain proper sweeping pressures and follow ground contours for any situation. The hopper is constructed of galvanized steel and six load wheels reduce ground compaction and increase load stability. The unit features a sweeping width of 69 inches and a capacity of 5.1 cubic yards. For more information contact 888-922-TURF.



Mike Snyder
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FALL CLEAN UP



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The Hurricane Plus series walk-behind wheeled blowers from Minuteman Parker are ideal for turf and hard surfaces and are powerful enough to remove leaves, loose debris and standing water. The unit is available in five, eight, or 11-hp Briggs & Stratton or Honda engines. These blowers create up to 2,200 cubic feet of air per minute and

are constructed of 12-gauge steel for increased durability. The Hurricane Plus is designed with a hand controlled deflector that can be adjusted to direct airflow out the front or side discharge. The series features a front grill for safety, silencing and debris deflection, handle mounted throttle control, pneumatic rear tires and vibration dampeners for operator comfort. For more information, contact: 630-6276900.

Goossen's new self powered blower

Goossen Industries introduces the BL3000 self powered debris blower. Its 27-inch diameter blower fan delivers a powerful thrust of wind to tackle tough clean up. The unit features a trailer for transport and can be towed by any truckster, tractor, or utility vehicle. A bi-directional discharge allows the user to change the direction of the airflow instantly. The BL3000 features a 22-hp Robin engine and floatation tires. For more information, contact 800-228-6542.

Leaves, labor

Continued from page 16

According to Myers, timing is key. In Vail the snow flies at the end of October. "We do the fall application of fungicides to the greens right after Labor Day, and then we do our full application to the entire course at the beginning of October."

At the Buffalo Hills Golf Course in Kalispell, Mont., near Glacier National Park, superintendent Patrick Meeker is also more concerned with the snow than the leaves. "Since we are up north here, we have to winterize the pump stations and fountains early," said Meeker. "We do all of our chemical applications for snow molds."

LABOR SHORTAGE CHALLENGES

From regulating snow mold to blowing out irrigation systems, there is always plenty to be done when the leaves are changing. With school starting up at the same time, however, all those high school and college kids who helped out during the summer are gone. Indeed, for many superintendents, the biggest obstacle in the fall lies in the decline of manual labor. The maintenance crew at Val Halla GC in Maine, for example, usually falls from 12 to six in the fall, doubling the load for those who remain.

"Our lack of labor when the fall comes around plays a big factor in the daily maintenance of the golf course," said Hodge. "So we have to try to get as much done as we can early on. I do all of the maintenance projects at the end of the summer while I have all my help, and up until Sept. 21 we mow the grasses like crazy. Once the grass stops growing, we start doing any projects on drainage, tee construction, bunker construction, and so forth."

Depending on location, season and individual layout, every superintendent adheres to different tips and techniques that ensure the visual and physical success of their golf course. Hodge faithfully abides by one such tip that he claims has been passed along from other superintendents and works wonders for his course.

"No matter what, I have to get all the debris cleaned up in the fall so that I'll have a better course in the spring," he explained. ■



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BRIEFS

MARRIOTT'S REDESIGNED CAMELBACK GC NOW OPEN

SCOTTSDALE, Ariz. — Marriott's Camelback Inn has announced the opening of the newly redesigned Camelback Golf Club. The \$16-million course and club represent Marriott's largest single golf course investment. The project features a complete redesign of the Resort Course (formerly called the Padre Course) by architect Arthur Hills. Instead of the desert setting found at most courses in the area, Camelback features a parkland setting with large mature trees. The finished product is a classic course, with strategic bunkering, traditional square tees and subtle land forms. Every hole features a new green and tee, as well as new bunkers. While some holes maintain their original routing, other have been re-routed to increase overall playability, competitiveness and appeal. Besides lengthening the course from 6,500 yards to 6,868, three new lakes have been added to enhance the course's challenge.

Camelback also has a new 36,000-square-foot, pueblo-style clubhouse, designed by Douglas Frederick Design, with flagstone patios and an outdoor fireplace. Silent beepers call golfers to their first tees, eliminating the public address system.

BOBBY WEED ENTERS MINNESOTA

PONTE VEDRA BEACH, Fla. — StoneRidge Golf Club, near the Minneapolis-St. Paul metro area, opened July 1. It is the first Weed design course in Minnesota. StoneRidge was built on an abandoned sand quarry and an Arabian horse farm. According to architect Bobby Weed, the layout should require players to use every club in their bags. "The golf course has a variety of one-, two- and three-shot holes that set up risk-reward situations," he said. "The more chance you take, the bigger the payoff or risk. But there are also options to play the course along a safer route." Rolling fairways are suited to playing shots on the ground, favoring a golfer who is comfortable with the style of the game played in the British Isles.

EASTWOOD DROPS COURSE PLAN

CARMEL, Calif. — Actor Clint Eastwood has decided to spare a California forest from the bulldozers, by halting a controversial golf course development. The move ends a year-long campaign to protect the 500-acre site at Pebble Beach, near Monterey.

Washington National opens University Course

AUBURN, Wash. — Washington National Golf Club (WNGC) has unveiled the first of a two-phase development with the opening of the University Course, which will serve as home to the University of Washington's men's and women's golf teams.

The public, 18-hole, par-72 layout, designed by golf architect John Fought, is owned and managed by Kirkland-based OB Sports.

The head coach of the Washington Huskies golf team, O.D. Vincent, is the son of Orrin Vincent, owner of OB Sports and a native of the Pacific Northwest. "It's been a dream of mine to build a course worthy of hosting a major championship, and Washington National is that course," said Orrin Vincent. "It is all the more meaningful having been afforded the opportunity to do it in my hometown."

The University Course features five sets of strategically placed ryegrass tees, allowing golfers of all skill levels to play the course, which ranges from 7,304 yards from the back pegs down to 5,117 yards from the shortest markers. A large club-



The 8th hole at the newly opened Washington National Golf Club

house deck overlooks the 18th hole and offers expansive views.

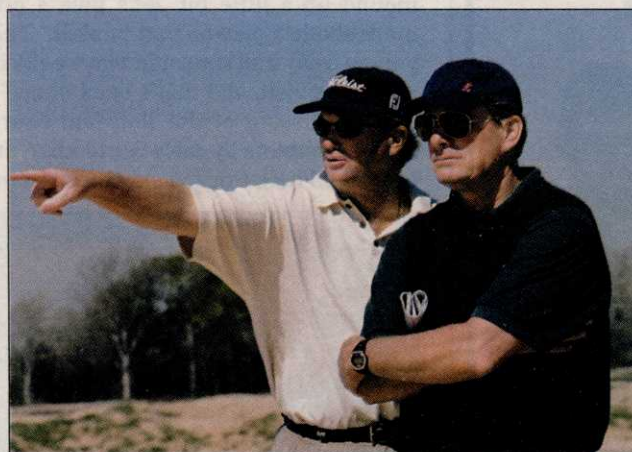
The most dramatic holes, perhaps, are the par-5 14th and the par-4 15th. Vincent modeled the 14th — a 635-yarder — after Pine Valley's sixth, a hole so tough it's often called "Hell's Half Acre." Vincent's version skirts several bunkers and requires a downhill third shot that can send balls bouncing sharply off the back of the green.

The 15th hole, 342 yards long, plays to an island green against a backdrop of boulders, flowers and a waterfall. Preci-

sion is required to reach the green safely. "This," said Vincent, "is an Augusta hole."

Various details at the course expand on the college theme. The golf carts, for example, are gold with purple trim, the Huskies' team colors. Each cart is custom named for a Husky athlete, and inside the cart is a description of that "Husky Legend." For instance, the Warren Moon cart features a rundown of his collegiate and pro football careers. There's also one custom colored cart for each of the other Pac-10 Conference schools, complete with

Continued on page 24



Peter Jacobsen (left) and Jim Hardy (right) on site at BlackHorse GC

Jacobsen/Hardy's BlackHorse Golf Club set to debut in fall

HOUSTON — The Redstone Co.'s newest golf project, BlackHorse Golf Club, is on schedule to open here this fall. Designed to be one of the premier daily-fee golf facilities in the Houston area, BlackHorse GC follows Redstone's successful development of The Houstonian Golf Club and the ShadowHawk Golf Club, both of which opened last year in Richmond, Texas.

BlackHorse includes the first of two 18-hole golf courses in Texas to be crafted by Jacobsen/Hardy Golf Design. The facility, located in northwest Houston, will feature a north course and a south course, a driving range, a clubhouse, a restaurant, a golf academy, an instruction center and a 2,000-square-foot pro shop.

In addition, it will include a teaching center that offers group clinics, private lessons, one-on-one video golf lessons, junior clinics and an indoor video classroom.

The club recently hired Roger Goettsch, formerly with Golf Services Group, of Cypress as course superintendent. Goettsch, who holds a B.S. in turf management from Iowa State University, has worked on a number of projects from the ground up, in Texas, Thailand and Indonesia, with such golf architects as Arnold Palmer, Gary Player, Desmond

Continued on page 25

Ernie Els Enterprises joins forces with Nicklaus Design

NORTH PALM BEACH, Fla. — Nicklaus Design has entered into a joint venture with Ernie Els Enterprises to pursue golf course design opportunities. The parties intend to develop, implement and market a golf course design business supported by the infrastructure of Nicklaus Design, and featuring the design work, strategies and endorsement of Ernie Els.

Nicklaus Design, a division of Golden Bear International, Inc., the privately held company of golfer Jack Nicklaus and the Nicklaus family, will provide Ernie Els Design, Ltd. with the staff and technical support required to complete the conceptual and planning documents necessary to design a golf course. Support will include all computer-aided design work related to routings, strategy

Continued on page 25

Oneida Nation's Shenandoah Golf Club ready for play

ONEIDA, N.Y. — The Oneida Indian Nation recently opened its 18-hole championship Shenandoah Golf Club adjacent to the Turning Stone Casino Resort in central New York. Playing to a par of 72 and ranging up to 7,129 yards from the back tees, the course provides a challenge for everyone from the high handicapper to the most accomplished shooters.

Designed, constructed and maintained to tournament standards, golfers at Shenandoah will experience conditions normally reserved for tour professionals. "The

Shenandoah Golf Club is a great tour-caliber course that is as fine a course as you will find anywhere in the United States," says Bob O'Brien, director of golf at Turning Stone Casino Resort.

The Oneida group chose course designer Rick Smith for his attention to detail and commitment to maintaining the integrity of the existing landscape. Recognized by Audubon International for his efforts in designing courses that preserve and enhance the environment, Smith has blended this 18-hole layout into its natural surroundings.

Witter Design adds Lembke, expands roster of projects

By JAY FINEGAN

LOCKPORT, N.Y. — The golf course architectural firm Witter Design has expanded its team with the addition of Brian Lembke as senior designer. Trained as a landscape architect at State University of New York School of Environmental Science and Forestry, Lembke spent the last three years with national golf course contractor Turf Drain Inc., where he learned the skills of course construction and shaping. His impact has been immediate with Witter Design, which has several projects underway this season.

According to golf architect and company founder Scott Witter, the addition of Lembke should give clients additional confidence that the same individuals who developed the design ideas will also transform them into the envisioned landscape.

Witter noted that, in many cases, superintendents and their crews are capable of handling the finishing aspects of a green, bunker, or tee renovation project. "For many clubs we work with, it makes a lot of sense for this to occur and we encourage it," he said.

Under these circumstances, Witter added, it's not easy to find an independent contractor who's capable of shaping a particular feature and who is interested in handing the remaining work over to the club. With the shaping and project coordination skills of Lembke, he said, Witter Design has opened up new opportunities to assure clients that their design intent will turn out as planned.

A case in point is the 89-year-old Potsdam Town and Country Club, in upstate New York. Witter Design is completing the finishing touches on nine new holes to bring the course up to 18 holes. It is a dramatic Adirondack mountain layout that crosses a trout stream seven times.

A local contractor, Ron's Agri-drainage Inc., accepted the challenge of the project without the experience of having built a course before. It was not long after the dirt was moved that Ron's Agri-drainage encountered trouble.

"Ron had no idea how to do the green-shaping, and he had no shaper — the shaper he was counting on fell through," Witter said. "He called and asked if we



The ninth hole at Lockport Town and CC in Lockport, N.Y. where Witter designed a two-hole expansion and made major renovations.

could spare Brian for a few weeks. It worked out very well. Brian had been one of Turf Drain's top shapers for three and a half years. It took care of Ron's crisis, because Brian was on top of the Cat 550 doing all the shaping. And I was going to get exactly what I wanted, because Brian was going to be my eyes on site. He gives us a new dimension.

"That's a big difference from the way most architect's work," Witter added. "Normally, we supervise construction and make changes, and say 'let's raise that mound up a little bit, let's give a little more shadow play on that bunker.' Then you go away and return in two weeks for your next visit, and that's been done."

The grassing of the Potsdam course will be complete by early September, and the full 18-hole track is expected to open

in fall 2001.

Also in progress for Witter Design is a new 18-hole daily-fee facility, Ironwood Golf Course, southeast of Buffalo. Set on scenic high ground in Wyoming County, the routing of the new course had to negotiate its way around a large television transmission tower. Ponds are now being excavated and earthmoving has begun for the rough shaping of green and tee sites. Irrigation and the primary feature construction will commence in the spring of 2001.

Other ongoing projects for the firm include multiple tee and bunker renovations at Midvale Golf and Country Club and Penfield Country Club, both in Rochester, N.Y. Witter Design is also working with architect Jerry Matthews to co-design the 18-hole Redjacket Golf Club.

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The 13th hole - "Blind Man's Bluff" - at Whistling Straits' Irish Course, which opened Aug. 1

Play begins at Dye's Irish Course

By MEGHAN FOLEY

KOHLER, Wis. — A fourth Pete Dye-designed golf course has joined the acclaimed combination of championship layouts at The American Club resort here. This one, named the Irish Course, lies adjacent to the Straits Course at Whistling Straits. Public play began August 1.

The Irish Course weaves around the western perimeter of the Whistling

Straits property, and features bentgrass tees, fairways and greens as well as large bunkers and sand dunes. Four creeks wind through the course and come into play on nine holes.

Five tee placements are marked on each hole, although more can be accommodated. The arrangement allows players of varying abilities to enjoy a round together without diminishing

Continued on next page

Hills' Sienna Plantation opens

MISSOURI CITY, Texas—The Sienna Plantation Golf Club, designed by Arthur Hills, has opened for play. The club is part of Sienna Plantation, a 10,500-acre community near Houston. The course winds through a forest and several lakes add challenges, offering risk/reward shot values.

"Spacious corridors afforded us

the opportunity to build a variety of golf holes," said Hills. "Our goal was to design an easy-to-maintain course that fit naturally onto the site, enhanced the beauty of the property and provided variety in the shots required. We wanted to be sensitive to the environment while keeping in mind the elements that give a course character."

Sienna's planners spent nearly a year identifying and delineating sensitive environmental areas and designed the course to have zero or minimal impact on the wetlands environment, said Doug Goff, general manager. Sienna worked with wetlands consultants to create areas of interest around the golf course, preserving the wetlands. On the course, the wetlands will be treated as hazards.



The 17th hole at the Arthur Hills-designed Sienna Plantation GC, near Houston

Irish Course

Continued from previous page

the challenge. Yardage measures 7,203 from the back tees and 5,109 from the front. Slope and ratings have not yet been established.

"My challenge in designing the Irish Course was to make it of equal stature with its neighbor, the Straits Course," said Pete Dye. "It had to be more than just a complement to the Straits—it had to be comparable." The renowned architect, whose creations have occasionally been described as "Dye-abolical," said he approached the project with particular fervor. "I've used every trick I've ever learned in designing this course," Dye said. "I should say this with some degree of modesty. In my lifetime, I've never seen anything like this. Anyplace. Period."

Steve Friendlander, general manager and director of golf for the Kohler resort, describes the Irish Course as an interesting hybrid. "It has parkland-style holes with trees and creek crossings, grassland holes that are somewhat flat and meandering, and the dunes and bunkers of a seaside links course, without the ocean."

In addition to the creeks that intersect the course, the layout also permits views of Lake Michigan from five holes. The lake is quite visible from hole 13, but that won't be the principal reason the 183-yard, par-3 will be memorable, according to Friendlander. Dubbed "blind man's bluff," hole 13 reveals only about 10 to 25 percent of its putting surface from most of the tee boxes. "It may be the most memorable hole you'll ever play in the United States," Friendlander predicted. "The green is absolutely huge, more than 20,000 square feet. But it's built down in the middle of a war zone with pot bunkers and dunes 20 to 40 feet high on three sides."

Whistling Straits is located nine miles northeast of the resort destination of Kohler, Wis. The resort's other amenities include The American Club, the Midwest's only AAA Five Diamond resort hotel; Blackwolf Run golf course, site of the 1998 U.S. Women's Open Championship; and Kohler Waters Spa, set to debut in this fall. The Straits Course will host the 2004 PGA Championship. ■

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SAJO Construction steps into world of course ownership

By FRANCES G. TRIMBLE

HOUSTON — Texas course builder Sam Sakocius and partners Terry and Mac Brown have ventured into the world of course ownership with Magnolia Creek Golf Club, in League City, Texas, south of here. It's a first for SAJO Construction, of nearby Richmond.

"We had been approached before [about part ownership] but we had a set of parameters that had to be met before we got involved," Sakocius said. "For one thing, we wanted the project to be in a fast-growing area within 100 miles of Houston, which League City is. And we wanted to be in partnership with a strong developer with previous experience."

That developer turned out to be Kinsel Industries Inc., a major player in large-scale industrial, commercial and housing projects. As plans for the 1,100-acre Magnolia Creek subdivision developed, Kinsel decided to set aside 400 acres for a golf course. At that point, Kinsel's Lynn Watkins contacted SAJO, because he was unsure of what could be accomplished with the site.

The land was flat, featureless, and dotted with fallow trees. "There wasn't much good there to save," Sakocius noted. However, because the area needs golf facilities, and because of the proposed extension to high-volume Bay Area Boulevard to the Magnolia Creek property, the property had potential.

Course architect Tom Clark of Ault, Clark & Associates, of Kensington, Md., was brought on board to design a 36-hole complex with links-style characteristics. The terrain has been cleared and drained, and 750,000 yards of earth have been moved to create what Clark described as "simulated dunes — pot bunkers with sod-stacked sides — links concepts you would expect to see in the UK." Clark added that a canal or "burn" runs alongside some holes and crosses others. A single lake has been constructed for water retention because, in Clark's words, "lakes are not traditionally found on links courses."

Clark has crafted a design with a medley of challenges. "There will be a great variety of short and long holes," he said, "par fours ranging from 281 yards to 475 yards and both reachable and non-reachable par five's. Each nine measures between 3,500 and 3,600 yards from the championship tees."

Builder Sakocius described the plantings to be added as, "native vegetation to give it a rustic, windswept, dunesy feel." He added, "Tom Clark has an

extensive design record and all of the people involved in this project have seen and experienced the old Scottish courses we are trying to recreate. That includes greens that have open approaches and closely mown collection areas at the sides and back." The typically stiff Gulf Coast winds, like the strong

breezes of coastal Scotland and Ireland, contribute another links-type feature.

Construction at Magnolia Creek began in November 1999, and the course is scheduled to have 18 holes in play by this coming November. Golf Solutions Inc. will manage the property, and Trey Stiles, a 20-year

veteran of the golf business, has been tapped as head professional. Though Magnolia Creek will be first and foremost a golf facility, Sam Sakocius says that the Richard Williams-designed clubhouse will feature "the type of banquet and dining accommodations golfers expect to find at a 36-hole establishment."



A rendering of two holes at Tom Clark's Magnolia Creek Golf Club



Fream's Andaman Club completes front nine

By ANDREW OVERBECK

THAHTAY KHUN ISLAND, Myanmar — Precipitation, and large amounts of it, have dictated the construction schedule of the 18-hole Fream and Dale Golfplan-designed course here at the Andaman Club in southern Myanmar. It is fitting, then, that the first nine holes will open

in November, following this year's rainy season.

"Last year between June and November we had over 15 feet of rain and that created certain construction problems," said Fream. "I don't get any easy jobs and we have been working three years to get these nine holes done."

According to Fream, working

between the rainy seasons stretches out the construction schedule because "you have to do everything and get the grass up before the rains come—or else you lose it all."

Rainfall was not the only factor that impacted Fream's design. Construction of the course has been undertaken using local



The green site on the 320-meter, par-4 second at the Andaman Club



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labor and basic methods.

"We didn't do what we would do in California or Tennessee as far as golf design," said Fream. "It is a nice course and the site is magnificent and the golf is going to be good. But it isn't overly extravagant because we are doing most of the work by hand. We have to do things that are practical in circumstance and then the course must be maintainable mostly by walk-behind equipment."

The construction employed between 125 and 150 local laborers, who did everything from sand capping the fairways to blasting through rock by hand.

"This isn't a high-tech operation," said Fream. "You do it the way you can get it done. It isn't practical to bring in high-priced equipment and put people out of work."

While the construction methods may not be high-tech, the results are certainly up to par. The course is set on undulating terrain, features views of the Andaman Sea and is surrounded by jungle vegetation.

"It is a unique site," he said, "with the massive trees, elevation change and views off in the horizon of smaller islands."

The highlight of the front nine is the 170-meter par-3 third hole which features a 75-foot drop from tee to green, eight different teeing positions and views of Thailand and Myanmar.

All 18 holes of the course are due to open in summer 2001. However, the resort hotel, which is popular with vacationing Thais, is expanding and Fream has been asked to put in another nine holes. "We may be here another three years," he said.

JOHNSTON TO DESIGN BLACKWATER

HILTON HEAD ISLAND, S.C. — Clyde Johnston has been retained to design an 18-hole semi-private course at Blackwater, a 600-acre community in Santee, S.C.

The 6,800-yard, par-72 course will be called Blackwater Golf and Fish Club. The three finishing holes of the course will be framed by the shoreline of Lake Marion, the largest lake in South Carolina. Completion of the course is expected in the fall of 2001.

Rulewich set to refurbish Palmetto Dunes

BERNARDSTON, Mass. — Golf architect Roger Rulewich has signed aboard to perform a complete makeover of the Robert Trent Jones Sr. course at Palmetto Dunes Resort on Hilton Head Island, S.C. Construction will start in May 2001 and will involve all 18 holes, including the rebuilding of the greens, tees and bunkers, along with drainage work.

"Robert Trent Jones Sr. gave me my start in this business. We spent more than 30 years together, so this is a special project," Rulewich said. "I'm excited about adding our touch to the tradition and heritage of this vintage golf course."

Established in 1969, the Roger Rulewich Group is a golf course design and construction firm based in Bernardston, Mass. It has provided services for courses including Medinah, Bellerive and Valderrama. Prior to forming the firm, Rulewich spent 34 years as a design associate with Robert Trent Jones, Sr., including 21 years as

senior designer.

"One of Robert Trent Jones, Sr.'s greatest talents was inspiring dedicated people to help him fulfill the obligations of completing an incredible list of new and remodeled courses. His courses took shape more from his 'eye' on site than from the detail of his plans," Rulewich explained. "He taught me the value of a hands-on approach to design that involves the skills of many others to interpret

and execute your ideas."

The Roger Rulewich Group has also teamed with Jaime Ortiz-Patino, president of the Valderrama Golf Club in Spain. Rulewich implemented Ortiz-Patino's plan to remodel the third, seventh, and 17th holes. The changes were made to add length to the course for future professional tournaments, including European Tour events and November's American Express

World Golf Championship. Previously, Valderrama played 6,818 yards; it now plays 6,993 yards.

"We're extremely pleased with the way the project turned out," Rulewich said. "We achieved our goals of adding significant yardage without compromising the integrity of the course."



Currently, the Rulewich Group is completing construction of four 18-hole layouts — Grande Dunes Resort CG, in Myrtle Beach, S.C.; Fox Hopyard GC, in East Haddam, Conn.; Saratoga National GC, in Saratoga, N.Y.; and Wild Turkey GC, in Hamburg, N.J. The firm also is remodeling the Yale University course, in Connecticut.

Husky course

Continued from page 19

a school logo and a description of that university on an inside placard. Near the cart staging area, 10 flagpoles fly the Pac-10 flags.

The clubhouse — the Varsity Club — is painted white with purple trim. Five TV sets inside play nothing but highlights of famous Husky events. The course continues the theme throughout the facility, including scorecard, bag tags, course flags, and so on.

Construction is scheduled to begin next summer on the project's second phase, which will include another 18-hole track, the Open Course. John Fought is designing this new course also, and plans call for an opening in the spring of 2003. The Open Course has been named in part as a tribute to the British Open. It will feature rolling mounds and Scottish-type playing conditions. While the Open Course is mostly devoid of trees, the University Course contains a blend of deciduous and evergreen trees.

"Given the combination of ideal soil conditions, tree cover and elevation change, we feel this is as fine a golf site as we have seen in the Northwest," Vincent said of WNGC, which encompasses 520 acres. Some 100 custom home lots, mostly along the University Course, are part of the project. ■

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BlackHorse

Continued from page 19

Muirhead and Ken Dye.

"I'm very excited about the BlackHorse project," he said. "The Jacobsen/Hardy group has designed a challenging and traditional, yet very aesthetically pleasing, layout that has enhanced the surrounding areas. BlackHorse creates an environmental sanctuary for wildlife and

golfers alike."

Matt Swanson, former director of golf at Ravenaux CC in Houston, has been appointed head golf professional.

Committed to protecting the environmental integrity of the site Jacobsen and Hardy went to great lengths to protect the trees, to minimize the effects of the land and to maximize environmental stewardship. The course feature several

wetlands and oxbows with palmetto and other native plant species that attract birds such as ducks, egrets, and sand hill cranes. The fairways use TifSport grass, while the greens feature TifEagle. Both Bermuda species are new to Houston-area daily-fee courses.

"We've taken advantage of the natural terrain and features of the area in order to challenge all

golfers," said Peter Jacobsen, a 22-year veteran of the PGA Tour and former golf commentator. "The use of the creek, lakes and wetlands, as well as the sand quarry and trees make this course unique among daily fee courses here. The course details, layout and environmental use of the land make it a special course for Houstonians."

The developer and owner of BlackHorse, Redstone Golf

Properties, serves as the holding company for additional golf properties to be purchased, developed or managed by The Redstone Companies. The company provides management for two Rees Jones-designed golf clubs in Richmond; the private ShadowHawk GC, and the resort-style Houstonian GC, an amenity to The Houstonian Hotel, Club & Spa in Houston. ■

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Nicklaus/Els

Continued from page 19

plans, layouts and feature details, and technical specifications. The venture's designs will be branded, marketed and promoted independently of Nicklaus Design, using the name, image and endorsement of Ernie Els.

Els' manager, Nic Frangos, approached Nicklaus Design last year to discuss opportunities for Els to work with the Golden Bear and his firm to learn the business of golf course design.

"Jack Nicklaus is the most highly regarded Tour professional designing golf courses today," Frangos said. "His firm has an established reputation of being one of the most talented, comprehensive, full-service design companies worldwide. Ernie wants to do more than simply lend his name to a golf course; he wants to be involved in the design business for years to come. It made sense for us to approach the Nicklaus organization to propose the joint venture."

Just as Nicklaus began his design career over 30 years ago working with such noted architects as Dick Wilson, Pete Dye and Desmond Muirhead, Els aspires to follow a similar pattern, Frangos said, learning from the best and eventually evolving into his own design company. Currently, the group is looking at several opportunities for Els' first design project.

"My staff and I are looking forward to working with Ernie," Nicklaus said. "I have long admired Ernie as a player. At the same time, I have admired him as a person. I am certain that if we are able to provide him the support and guidance he needs, once that is combined with his desire to excel, Ernie will become as talented a golf course designer as he is a player." ■

Moose Run

Continued from page 1

choose the best part of the area, design a course, and build it within the budget. Eleven companies applied, and we won."

BEAR REPELLENT BACKFIRES

Nobody thinks of Alaska as a mecca for golf, and it's not. This new course brings the state's total to 19. But the season runs from May until late September

or early October, Nelson said, and in June and July you can play around the clock. "This is the land of the midnight sun," he said, "and in the summer they'll start foursomes off at eight o'clock at night. This course will easily see 35,000 or 40,000 rounds a year."

Wildlife added a special dimension to the construction phase. "The whole area is environmentally sensitive," Nelson said. "The

area we chose is in a woodland with a riparian stream that comes down to form an alluvial fan. It's a big habitat for bears, wolves, foxes, moose – all kinds of animals.

"Everybody who worked on the course carried a can of bear repellent in the event of attack," he said. "It is actually pepper spray. You've got to make sure to spray it on the bear and not on yourself. There was one guy from the 'lower 48' who didn't know

any better. He thought it was like insect repellent and sprayed it all over himself – and man, he just went wild, because it affects your nervous system. It really works on bears, too."

Moose proved to be the most destructive beasts, especially on the fourth green, which sits way out in a remote corner of the site. "That green was completely destroyed when a couple of moose rutted there," Nelson



Moose Run's 17th hole

said. "They love to do their mating rituals on putting greens for some reason, and that green hasn't fully come back yet."

The animals haven't left the area, but nonetheless Army officials have declared the course safe for play.

NO SAFE SLICES

Nelson said he didn't design the Creek Course to be unusually difficult. The extreme slope rating of 142, he said, has mostly to do with the 100 yards of nearly impenetrable forest between holes.

"Beyond the proper maintained rough, where you get into the jungle, the ball goes in there and it's gone," he said. "Eventually the Army is going to have to clean that out – it's just incredibly overgrown. I talked to a guy on the slope committee, who said

'This is the land of the midnight sun. In the summer they'll start foursomes off at eight o'clock at night.'

— Robin Nelson

they'd come back in a year and do another review. The rating will probably go down after that. It wasn't designed to be that hard. It's just that if you hit a bad slice, it's all over."

Why the huge space between fairways? "The job specified 300 feet of natural area between them, mostly because of wildlife habitat," Nelson said. "The animals like the forest edges and they love to hide between the fairways."

The course's length should not pose an undue problem for golfers, he said. "The 11th hole is about 640 yards from the gold tees, and 18 is close to 600," he said. "But you can almost get there in two, because these are big downhill shots. You can hit it 300 yards off the tee, so it works well."

Nelson has been involved in designing more than 100 courses worldwide, including numerous layouts in Asia and the South Pacific. He recently moved his headquarters from Hawaii to Mill Valley, Calif., near San Francisco. ■

GOLF COURSE NEWS

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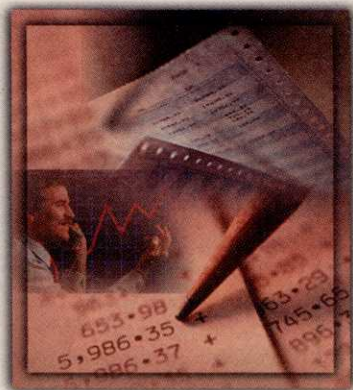
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GOLF PARTNERS WORLDWIDE OPEN FOR BUSINESS

SCOTTSDALE, Ariz. — Golf Partners Worldwide LLC is open for business. The company, based here, will seek business opportunities throughout the world. Members Marv French, Ed Gowan, Gary Grigg, John Miller and Steve Zavodnick have extensive backgrounds in the game of golf ranging from ownership, management, construction and development, agronomy and legal expertise. The five members have been involved golf projects such as Pumpkin Ridge outside of Portland, Ore., The Boulders Resort in Scottsdale, Shadow Glen Golf Club near Kansas City and Royal Poinciana in Naples, Fla.

WESTERN GOLF PROP. NAMES EDGMON

SCOTTSDALE, Ariz. — Western Golf Properties, Inc. has announced the appointment of Hugh Edgmon to president and CEO of the company. Edgmon replaces Joe Black who has moved into a director position on the company's board. Edgmon has been associated with Western Golf Properties for over five years, beginning as general manager at Serrano Country Club, and most recently as vice president of western regional operations, where he oversaw the management of five golf properties. In his new role, Mr. Edgmon will personally oversee the management and operations for all Western Golf Properties.

INTRAWEST APPOINTS THOMPSON

PHOENIX, Ariz. — Intrawest Golf has appointed of Kyle A. Thompson director of retail sales. He will be responsible for establishing a business plan and directing the functions of the retail division by spearheading the retail initiative at the corporate and facility level. Thompson comes to Intrawest from Sears, Roebuck and Co., where he was a merchandise planner.

BRIERWOOD HIRES HOPKINS

HAMBURG, N.Y. — Brierwood Country Club has hired Richard S. Hopkins, Jr. as the new membership services manager here at this private, Arnold Palmer Golf Management-owned club in suburban Buffalo. Hopkins will be responsible for the sales of new golf and social memberships at Brierwood while also providing account services for the club's current membership. A native of Niagara Falls, N.Y., Hopkins was most recently an account executive with the NHL's Buffalo Sabres.

GOLF COURSE NEWS

Del Webb to add more new courses to REIT

By ANDREW OVERBECK

PHOENIX, Ariz. — After more than four decades of developing "active adult" communities and building golf courses, Del Webb Corp. has taken a new direction with its golf operations. While the company manages the 16 courses that it has built over the years, it has also established a real estate investment trust (REIT) as an entity to hold some of its golf course assets.

"The company builds terrific golf assets and then gives them away to home owners," said Henry DeLozier, vice president of golf operations. "Two years ago, Del Webb determined to make a transition from giving away courses to transferring ownership into a closely held REIT and turning golf operations into a profit center."

Of Del Webb's 16 courses, six are under the REIT and 10 are dedicated to the homeowners' associations. The courses in the REIT have all opened in the last two years. However, in the next three to four years, Del Webb will be adding 14 more courses to its existing communities.

"Of the 14 new courses, eight will be under the REIT, four are promised to homeowners and two are still up in the



Sun City Huntley, in Huntley, Ill. is Del Webb's first development outside the Sun Belt

air," said DeLozier.

EXPLOITING A NICHE MARKET

Del Webb, which did \$2 billion in sales last year alone, is experiencing continuing growth for two reasons according to DeLozier. "One, we are selling a lot of homes. Two, we are in a lot of really strong markets," he said.

While over development and lack of new players is leading to over supply in some parts of the country, Del Webb has remained somewhat insulated from the challenges facing both developers and existing courses.

"We are unique to the golf industry be-

cause we have the competitive advantage of full golf courses," said DeLozier. "Our residents can play on any day of the week, whereas many courses in overbuilt markets struggle because they cannot fill off-peak capacity. We have a good demographic. Our golfers are ready to play — not only do they have more discretionary income, they also have more discretionary time."

Even though 20 to 25 percent of Del Webb residents are golfers, anywhere from 20 to 50 percent of golfers are visitors, said DeLozier. New rates have been introduced to entice visitors, while still preserving

Continued on page 29



Elkhorn Golf Club

Doral Golf to manage Elkhorn GC in Idaho's Pioneer Range

SUN VALLEY, Idaho — MeriStar Hotels & Resorts announced that its Doral Golf Division has signed an agreement with an affiliate of New York-based Blackacre Capital Group, LLC, to manage the upscale Elkhorn Golf Club here in Sun Valley. Blackacre Capital is a privately held fund with investments in golf, hotels and other commercial properties.

"This is the second we'll manage for Blackacre," said Paul W. Whetsell, MeriStar chairman and CEO. "Our plan is to continue to build on existing relationships with individual owners and institutional investors like Blackacre, as well as seek new ones. We intend to add to our current management portfolio of 12 upscale and luxury golf courses throughout North America at a deliberate pace."

Designed by Robert Trent Jones and Robert Trent Jones Jr., Elkhorn Golf Club is a semi-private, 7,100-plus-yard, 18-hole championship course with a driving range and putting green. Blackacre recently completed construction of a 7,500-square-foot club house, which includes a 50-seat grille, pro shop and locker rooms.

The Elkhorn Golf Club is part of The Elkhorn Resort, a comprehensive resort village located in Sun Valley, which includes a resort hotel, shops, restaurants, condominiums, and single family homes.

The Orchards GC unveils clubhouse, membership deal

By HAL PHILLIPS

SOUTH HADLEY, Mass. — The elegant Donald Ross design here at The Orchards Golf Club can now boast a clubhouse of comparable quality, following a renovation and upgrade directed by Arnold Palmer Golf Management. The unveiling took place Aug. 1.

The Orchards GC was the brainchild of one Joseph Skinner, who commissioned Ross to design the course for his daughter in the 1920s. In 1941, Skinner donated the 18-hole course to Mount Holyoke College, which still owns the club. Palmer manages the facility on the school's behalf.

"The clubhouse is an old carriage house which was moved from the Skinner property to the course in the early 1940s," said Orchards general manger Glenn Zito. The

Continued on page 29

ClubLink sells Piedmont GC to ClubCorp for \$9.5 million

KING CITY, ONTARIO — ClubLink Corp. has sold Piedmont Golf Club in Haymarket, Va. to ClubCorp, Inc. for net proceeds of \$9.5 million. ClubCorp, based in Dallas, currently owns 26 percent of ClubLink's common shares.

ClubLink acquired Piedmont Golf Club in March from developer GolfSouth Holdings LLC as part of an option agreement held by ClubLink U.S. Corp., a wholly owned subsidiary of ClubLink. Piedmont Golf Club, which is located near Washington, D.C., is a private golf course under construction.

"Because of ClubCorp's already strong presence in the Washington, D.C., market and their substantial ownership position in ClubLink, it made sense for ClubCorp to own and operate Piedmont Golf Club," said Bruce Simmonds, ClubLink president and chief executive officer.

In addition to the \$9.5-million payoff, ClubLink has received a perpetual 20-percent profit and liquidation participation, payable from cash flow generated by Piedmont after a fixed return on ClubCorp's invested capital and its repayment.

Carl M. Freeman Golf acquires Hell's Point

BETHANY BEACH, Del. — With its goals firmly set on expanding in the Virginia Beach area, Carl M. Freeman Golf has purchased Hell's Point Golf Club located in Virginia Beach, Va.

The management company also owns and operates Bear Trap Dunes Golf Club, in

Ocean View, Del., and The Bay Club, just outside Ocean City, Md.

Hell's Point Golf Club, which opened in 1982, was designed by Rees Jones. The 6,766 yard, par-72 layout places an emphasis on strategy, rather than length, with creative fairway angles, challenging greens and

61 sand traps.

"The purchase of Hell's Point marks the beginning of our growth within the Virginia Beach golf market," said Jeff Wine, vice president of Carl M. Freeman Golf. "This valuable addition to our Mid-Atlantic golf course portfolio will enable us to capitalize on our

strengths and successes in course quality that we've built in the Delaware and Maryland coastal area."

Tom Stevenson will continue his role of managing the facility, and the other staff members will join the Freeman Golf team. Assisting with the operations at Hell's Point will be Bill Hamilton, director of golf operations for Carl M. Freeman Golf.

LinksTime, e2e team up

BELLEVUE, Wash. — In an effort to continue developing strategies that will provide greater traffic and exposure for its member courses, LinksTime, a provider of Internet marketing and software solutions to the golf marketplace, has teamed with e2e Golf Solutions, a company that offers end-to-end software and Internet services for the golf industry.

"This alliance is congruent with our strategy of offering the best and convenient service for golfers and golf course owners alike," said Jim Sorenson, president of LinksTime. "With this partnership, e2e Golf and LinksTime are providing a broader reach for golfers and creating valuable marketing opportunities for golf course owners to better promote their facilities."

Through the alliance, tee times at LinksTime's member courses will be accessible online through e2e Golf's tee time reservation network. The network consists of more than 200 websites including AOL, Mindspring, CNN/SI.com, USAToday.com, as well as 107,000 travel agency locations.

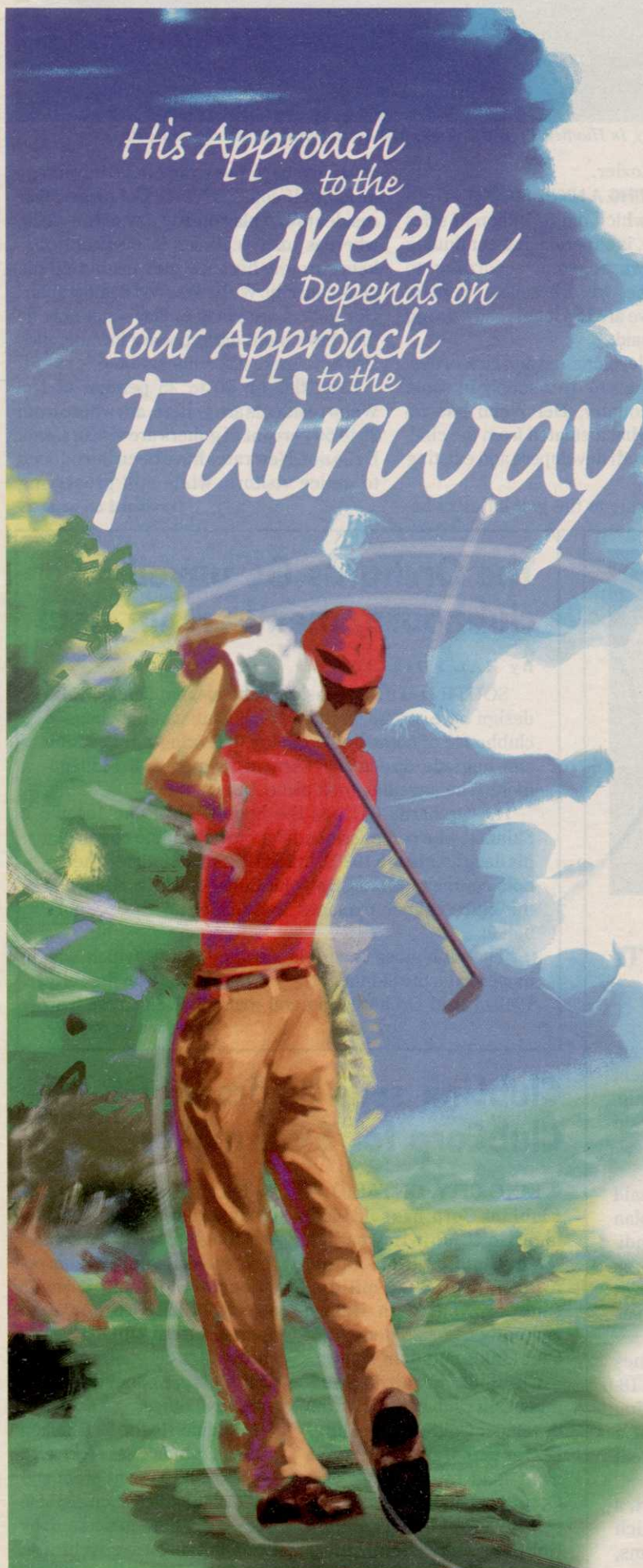
"This is a milestone in building the online community of courses at which the golfer can access and book tee times," said Larry Lippon, president and CEO of e2e Golf Solutions. "e2e Golf has built one of the most extensive tee time reservation networks in the industry with over 500 online golf courses and hundreds of travel and Internet partners."

As part of the reciprocal agreement, e2e Golf's inventory of course tee times will be available on the LinksTime website (www.linkstime.com). LinksTime courses are located throughout the U.S.

IGM MAINTAINING SILVER LAKES

LAKE LAND, Fla. — International Golf Maintenance (IGM) has taken over the maintenance operation at Silver Lakes Country Club, a 27-hole course at a residential resort community in Helendale, Calif. "IGM has made visible improvements to the course in a short amount of time," said Bobbi Byington-Rourke, general manager of Silver Lakes. The new arrangement began June 1.

GOLF COURSE NEWS



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The Orchards

Continued from page 27

clubhouse is a fitting complement to the course, which is perhaps one of the best-preserved examples of Ross' architectural genius, Zito added. In fact, Massachusetts Golf Association (MGA) members recently recognized The Orchards GC as the state's pre-eminent "hidden gem" and will hold the 2001 State Amateur here.

Del Webb

Continued from page 27

affordable rates for residents.

While the growth in the number of golfers has been stagnant, DeLozier is more concerned with other economic indicators, directing his attention instead to the housing market.

"People who buy homes from us are in most cases selling a place before they move," he said. "So it is the person who qualifies to buy their old place that we are the most concerned about."

ZOOMERS

As the market for its resort-style communities has grown, more active baby boomers are now becoming residents, thus changing Del Webb's course design strategy.

"We call them 'zoomers'," said DeLozier. "These are people who expect high quality golf. So we are giving them courses that are longer and more challenging."

For instance, at Sun City Hilton Head, the first course, Okatie Creek, was built in the traditional Del Webb model of resort golf—a nice and easy course that is relatively flat and has few obstacles. "On the second course, Hidden Cypress, we asked Mark McCumber [the designer] to turn up the heat a little bit," said DeLozier. "The course is 7,100 yards and is all the challenge you can want." That course opened in May.

GOING FORWARD

While Del Webb will be adding courses to its existing communities over the next three to four years, the company is also looking at other markets. Currently, there are no details on where these developments may be built, but Del Webb's most recent venture in Illinois may be an indication of future plans.

In June, the first Sun City community outside of the Sun Belt opened in Huntley, Ill. Sun City Huntley includes Whisper Creek Golf Course, which was designed by Greg Nash and Billy Casper.

"Many of our buyers in the Sun Belt come to us from the Midwest," said DeLozier. "Our polling told us that there is an audience that will always consider themselves Chicagoans and they don't want to get too far away from family and business activities." ■

Starting this year, full-access memberships have been offered on two levels: "regional", for golfers who live within a 40- to 75-mile radius of the club (\$1,250 initiation, \$1,500 in annual dues); and "national", for those who live outside the 75-mile zone (\$750 initiation, \$1,000 in annual dues). The membership program at The Orchards is unique to New England, "but it's commonplace in resort areas, and in Britain,

where many prestigious clubs offer 'international' memberships," Zito explained. "The response to this membership policy has been enthusiastic."

The location of The Orchards makes this membership approach feasible. Located just off Interstate 91, South Hadley is accessible to metropolitan New York, Hartford, Providence and Boston. Palmer has already welcomed new members from 15 states. ■



The newly renovated clubhouse at The Orchards GC

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Course valuations flat or declining

Continued from page 1

frenzied market of the past few years seems to be "taking a breather." Hirsh sees no imminent "bust" in the market, but said it is clear that course buyers have become more price conscious.

Two years ago, 90 percent of respondents to a similar GPA survey said they perceived course

values to be on the rise. Last year, half of them believed prices were still climbing. But this year, half of respondents said values were stagnant, and another 29 percent reported that golf course prices were actually falling. Only 21 percent perceived values as being on the upswing.

IMPACT OF INTEREST RATES

Hirsh ascribed the shift to the interest-rate environment.

"There is certainly a reality that rising interest rates negatively affect the value of golf courses—and all income-producing properties, for that matter," he explained. "The rising rates create higher costs for money and lower values. But there's still nothing to suggest that revenues and cash flows are declining.

Greens fees are still going up, and cash flows should be improving, at least in theory.

"But the bottom line is, that could be perceived as real value declining, because the same amount of net income won't create the same amount of value it used to," he said. "With interest rates higher, in order to get the same amount of value, you'd need more income."

Among the survey's biggest surprises, Hirsh said, is that 50 percent of responding firms indicated a preference for private facilities over daily-fee operations. From 1997 to 1999, management companies looking to buy golf clubs showed an overwhelming preference for public courses. Suddenly, that has changed.

"While the golf course industry continues to churn out more than 300 new daily-fees each year, it's become clear to me—through my own experience, and through the results of this particular survey—that certain influential management firms now see more opportunity on the private side," Hirsh said. "This could be a sign that the daily-fee market represents less upside opportunity as perceived by investors. There are a whole lot of daily-fee facilities out there—72 percent of all the courses in the country—and some people have just decided to focus on private clubs."

ACTION HEATS UP IN NORTH

Equally surprising, Hirsh said, is the new interest in courses in the North and Northeast. Last year, 65 percent of acquiring companies preferred Sunbelt locations, but that attitude is definitely changing.

One reason, Hirsh said, could be that buyers see the Southeast and Southwest as saturated with courses. Another could be that management firms have awakened to the advantages of running courses in such places as Michigan, Pennsylvania and New England.

"There are many operational issues that affect profitability," Hirsh said. "In the South, they have to be open all year long, and maintained all year long. In many cases, in Florida in particular, people don't want to play golf in the summertime, but that's when they have the most tee times to sell, because of the daylight. In the winter in Florida, they can't put anybody on the course after about one-thirty in the afternoon.

"In the North, the playing season is shorter, but they can sell tee times up til four o'clock. That's a big advantage," Hirsh said. "They can close in the winter and not have to pay people to maintain the course then. Consequently, you might enjoy strong cash flow. So the acquiring companies see a lot of opportunity in well-positioned cool-season courses. There are a lot of population centers in the Northeast and Midwest."

Hirsh, whose company performs valuation, consulting and brokerage services, said quite a few companies are actively looking for acquisitions in the North. "Gotham Golf Partners, Arnold Palmer Golf Management Company, Crown Golf Properties, LinksCorp—those are just a few that I know are looking favorably upon the Northeast," he said. ■

GOLF COURSE NEWS



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BRIEFS

ASIC ELECTS NEW OFFICERS

VANCOUVER, British Columbia — The newly elected officers and directors of the American Society of Irrigation Consultants (ASIC) assumed their offices, here, at the annual conference of the society. Officers are elected to one year terms for the fiscal year 2000-2001. Directors are elected to three year terms.

Brian Vinchesi, Irrigation Consulting Inc., Pepperell, Mass. was elected to the presidency. Jim Barrett, James Barrett Associates, Inc., Montclair, N.J. assumed the office of vice president. Dan Benner, Hydro Environmental, Inc., Marietta, Ga. is the new secretary and David D. Davis, David D. Davis and Associates, Rancho Cucamonga, Calif. assumes the duties of treasurer. All of the officers are Professional Members of ASIC.

Elected to three year terms as directors of the society are Steve Sisler, Spectrum Irrigation Consulting, Inc., Mesa, Ariz., Norman Bartlett, Data Industrial Corp., Mattapoisett, Mass. and Rick Davis, Rain Bird Sales Inc., Tucson, Ariz. Stephen W. Smith, Aqua Engineering Inc., Ft. Collins, Colo., a past president of the society, was appointed to fill the vacant director's position.

BARENBRUG NAMES ZELLEY

OGDENSBURG, N.J. — Jennifer Zelley has been appointed as territory manager for New Jersey. Prior to joining Barenbrug, Zelley was associated with Manheimer-Hertzog as a horticulturist.



Jennifer Zelley

HARMONY APPOINTS GARRETT

CHESAPEAKE, Va. — Harmony Products, Inc. has appointed Lowell Garrett as plant manager of the new Harmony-Shenandoah Valley manufacturing facility being constructed by Harmony in Harrisonburg. The new facility will have the capacity to produce approximately 65,000 tons of fertilizer per year.

SETTER JOINS AQUATROLS

CHERRY HILL, N.J. — Joe Setter has joined Aquatrols as the new territory manager for the southeast region. Setter will cover Arkansas, Colorado, Kansas, Louisiana, Missouri, New Mexico, Oklahoma and Texas.

Turf Partners, ABT deals done, Simplot busy putting pieces together

By ANDREW OVERBECK

BOISE, Idaho — With the acquisition of Turf Partners completed and the purchase of turfgrass seed and specialty distribution assets from the now-defunct AgriBioTech (ABT) finalized, Simplot Turf and Horticulture (Simplot T&H) is now putting the new pieces of its expanding business together.

"We are creating a fairly new organization out of parts of the Simplot Company," said Bill Whitacre, president of Simplot T&H, who left his CEO post at St. Joseph, Mo.-based Research Seeds to join the company May 1. "This is a work in progress. We are building the systems and processes right now."

The challenge, according to Whitacre, is staying focused on customers while at the same time working on organizational and structural issues. "We are forming a central administrative group so that we can move the transactional processes through," he said. "This allows the business units to focus on the customer and run the business." Simplot T&H will be moving to new digs in Boise this fall.

SIMPLOT PARTNERS

After months of negotiations, Simplot T&H finally purchased Turf Partners, Eco Soil System's distribution arm, in late July for \$61.5 million, including \$38.5 million in bank debt and vendor payables. The company is already moving to integrate Turf Partner's 25 locations and 200 employees and has changed the name of the new distribution division to Simplot Partners. Nick Spardy will be the general manager of the company, which will continue to be based in San Diego.

In the near term, Simplot Partners gives

the company access to markets in the Northeast and Midwest. However, Simplot T&H is looking to do more.

"There are areas that Simplot Partners is not strong in, such as Texas and the Southeast and we will need to analyze those areas," said Whitacre. "Our objective is to be a nationwide organization."

Simplot T&H will also carry forward Eco Soil's e-commerce initiative, which is, for now, a work in progress.



Bill Whitacre

"There will be an e-commerce revolution in this market sector," said Whitacre. "[Our web site] will create value way beyond the logistical process of fulfilling an order. It will be more of a tool, helping the superintendent manage his business and budget."

In addition to strengthening its distribution network and adding e-commerce capabilities, Simplot Partners has also agreed to market Eco Soil's proprietary FreshPack products. Simplot agreed to purchase a minimum of \$5 million of FreshPack products during the first two years of its five-year distribution deal.

Whitacre said the company is also looking at the marketability of Eco Soil's BioJect biological distribution system. "We are staying close on those products," he said. "We believe that it [BioJect] has an excellent opportunity in the marketplace."

ABT VARIETIES

In addition to turfgrass varieties, Simplot T&H also picked up some distribution locations in the ABT buy out. However, it is already looking at consolidating those companies.

"The Las Vegas site is new, so we will

Continued on page 37

Parkway helps supers get rid of excess supply

By ANDREW OVERBECK

HOUSTON — Sensing a need to relieve superintendents of excess chemicals and fertilizers, Parkway Research has created CleanUpTheChemicalRoom.com, a service that turns unwanted inventory into a usable asset.

Parkway Research, a national manufacturer and blender of specialty golf chemicals and fertilizers, launched the website in February as a way to help superintendents and boost company sales at the same time.

"We got the idea that if we can figure out a way for a superintendent to rotate stock he is not going to use," said company president Ray Kimmel, "then perhaps we can get some of our stuff in there."

For example, if a superintendent has 10 cases of Roundup that he wants to get rid of, the company would buy that from him for a percentage of the market value and give him credit for Parkway products in that dollar amount. The company then turns around and sells the Roundup to interested buyers. Parkway arranges the shipping and those costs come out of the initial transaction.

"We acquire products at a cost that is very reasonable. And the trade value of our manufactured goods in effect brings down our cost of goods," said Kimmel. "As a result we make two customers happy. One gets rid of stuff he didn't

Continued on page 33

Tyler ready with Louisville operation

ELWOOD, Ill. — Bruce Jasurda, COO of Tyler Enterprises has announced the opening of a full-service warehouse and delivery operation in Louisville, Ky. The 3,200-square-foot building in the Bluegrass Corporate Center will serve as a distribution center for Tyler's custom blended fertilizer products and specialty chemicals, and as an office for the Kentucky sales and service team.

"Five months ago, Tyler launched an aggressive marketing and sales effort into the Kentucky golf course, landscape, lawn care, nursery and public grounds markets," said Jasurda. "The opening of this facility represents our commitment to the specialty turf customers in the state."

The distribution center will be managed by Sam Huff, who is also responsible for sales, delivery operations and the scheduling of Tyler's proprietary custom fertilizer application system for golf courses. Company officials have indicated that additional staffing of the facility is currently underway.



JOHN DEERE 4700 COMPACT UTILITY TRACTOR WINS AE50 AWARD

MILWAUKEE — The John Deere 4700 compact utility tractor has been given an AE50 Award by Resource: Engineering & Technology for a Sustainable World. The award was presented to the John Deere Commercial Products Group at the 13th ASAE annual international meeting here. AE50 awards are given each year to honor companies that release the best new products engineered for agriculture, food, biological and related systems. "We are proud that the AE50 program has recognized the 4700 for its innovation," said Terry Brown, product manager compact tractors for John Deere Commercial Products. "The 4700 is the highest horsepower tractor with hydrostatic transmission in its class. We think this is one element that made it stand out above other entries."

Course management software coming on stream

By ANDREW OVERBECK

Two software companies are close to rolling out superintendent-specific software systems that are aimed at improving the effectiveness and efficiency of course maintenance. The turf management programs both key

in on insect and disease identification, inventory and equipment control, personnel management, scheduling and course budgeting.

While the software is intended for use by superintendents, each company is pitching its systems first to management companies.

"It is easier to work with one management company that has 110 courses than it is to work with 110 different courses," said AID'Amelio, founder of eturfgrass.com. "Plus, it is a tougher sell to individual superintendents because some don't want all of that empirical data in one place. However, management companies want that information."

ETURFGRASS.COM

D'Amelio, whose original com-

pany was called Computer Diagnostic Links, has been developing his software program for the past seven years and is currently in talks with International Golf Maintenance to launch the product. To develop Centereach, N.Y.-based eturfgrass.com, he has worked with superintendents, turfgrass students at Cornell, members of the U.S. Golf Association's Green Sec-

tion, golf course architects, and "anyone else who would listen."

The program contains a constantly updated turfgrass disease and insect database complete with descriptions and photographs. The interactive program can also offer tips and information on methods of application and product information. The course management tools allow superintendents to track personnel records and scheduling, inventory and maintenance of machinery, and chemical treatment history. All of this information can be remotely accessed in order to monitor course operations. D'Amelio has also created video tutorials, including sessions on Environmental Protection Agency regulations and Occupational and Safety and Hazard Administration rules.

The program is customized for each course and will initially cost roughly \$10,000, said D'Amelio. The company also charges a monthly maintenance fee of \$149. The software is available on CD-ROM, and quarterly updates will be available over the Internet or via CD-ROM.

GREENSCAPE MANAGER

Another entrant into the turfgrass software arena is Hobe Sound, Fla.-based Phoenix Software Systems, Inc. They have been developing Greenscape Manager for the past eight months and are now looking to team up with a larger management company to complete the development phase of the project.

"We are looking at management companies as a source of funding because they have a vested interest in developing this type of application," said Matthew Graham, vice president of product development. "The software will allow them to track course operations from a central location. They can take a comparative look at courses in a region and make recommendations and improvements."

The Windows-based software includes three static databases that will define all plants, diseases and insects affecting particular regions. It will also provide information such as current market value, health and condition, identification, and location to establish a green asset valuation. The program's 14 modules will include soil, water, equipment inventory and maintenance; course layout graphics; employee records; as well as comprehensive expense and budgeting modules. Cost has yet to be set for the software system.

Phoenix is now working on strategic partnerships with Internet providers and soil analysis companies to put together regional service agreements. According to Graham, once funding is arranged, the program would be ready for release in a year.

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John Deere updates logo

MOLINE, Ill. — John Deere has updated its leaping deer trademark to appear stronger and more dynamic with a greater emphasis placed on the John Deere name.



JOHN DEERE

"This evolution of the John Deere trademark symbolizes that world leaders are progressive and agile," said Hans W. Becherer, chairman of Deere & Co.

Parkway

Continued from page 31

need or want and the other buys it at a reduced cost."

So far the new service has worked well, said Kimmel. "We get a lot of inquiries for products that have either expired registrations or are too hazardous," he said. "We turn down a lot of trades, but we accept most. We only take stuff that we know we can resell—most golf course specialty chemicals that are in original sealed containers and don't have expired registration we can dispose of fairly quickly."

Products are inspected once they arrive at Parkway, and if they are in resellable condition the deal is complete and credit is issued to the seller. Unacceptable products are shipped back to sellers at their expense.

As the new stock rolls in, Parkway salespeople are given a list of what has been acquired. "We sell it off quickly," said Kimmel, "because we make those products available at very good prices." Cleanupchemicalroom.com also lists available products on the Internet.

The new service has been well-received by Parkway's 3,500 golf course customers and has given its salespeople a new and valuable selling tool.

While Kimmel isn't sure if the new service has attracted customers, he does know that it has helped to strengthen his existing customer base. "I don't know if it has brought in any new customers," he said. "But I think it has helped to develop those we already had." ■

GOLF COURSE NEWS

Rain Bird extends supplier agreement with Pebble Beach

AZUSA, Calif. — Rain Bird has extended its exclusive agreement with Pebble Beach Resorts as the official irrigation supplier. The new agreement runs through 2003. Rain Bird will have official supplier status on all Pebble Beach Co. managed properties including Pebble Beach Golf Links, Spyglass Hill Golf

Course, the Links at Spanish Bay, and Del Monte Golf Course.

"When we installed Rain Bird five years ago, we were convinced that it could provide us the level of technology and com-

mitment to service that we require," said Ted Horton, vice president of resource management. "The U.S. Open preparation this year has confirmed that belief."

As part of the agreement, Rain Bird will also receive input from Pebble Beach Co.'s superintendents for product research and development purposes.

"Rain Bird has benefited from its relationship with Pebble Beach," said Mike Donoghue, Rain Bird Golf Division director. "The stature of the golf course, the expectations for playing conditions, the weather, and the environmental sensitivity of the site combine to provide a true challenge for an irrigation system."



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TORO IRRIGATION

XSTurf.com

Continued from page 1

The site currently has more than 50,000 registered users.

XS Inc. will apply the same model to the turf and ornamental marketplace.

"The fundamentals of the turf and ornamentals market are not that different from agriculture," said Harry Albert, director of the company's specialty business

unit, who has been in the employ of Aventis, Rhone-Poulenc and Union Carbide during his career. "You have the exact same active ingredients in chemicals - you have seed, just different kinds of seed, and you have parts and equipment."

With the addition of hundreds of new golf courses a year, there are similar levels of competition and pressures to reduce costs in the turf market as there are in

the ag market, added Albert.

"A lot of courses are being built and not many more golfers are being added," he said. "Some courses that have been taking their budgets up five or 10 percent each year are now having to live with 95 percent of last year's budget instead."

BUYERS AND SELLERS TO BENEFIT

According to Albert, XSTurf.com will provide a marketplace that will lead to a more

efficient exchange of products.

"You have many and fragmented sellers and diverse and fragmented buyers and a lot of products on the market that do the same thing," he said. "When you have that type of marketplace a true exchange is the way to sort out what the true costs are and what the most effective market mechanism is."

Sellers

Sellers, for the most part, will

be distributors, manufacturers and dealers. Shipping costs will be passed along to the seller and they will be charged a two percent transaction fee. Those firms listing chemicals must have a pesticide dealer's license and those buying chemicals must have a commercial applicator's license.

"Sellers have lots of choices. We don't force them into a mode," said Albert. "They can put a product on as an auction or at a fixed price; the seller can be anonymous or identified; they can use our shipping or their own; they can use our escrow services or their own; and they can segment their listings down to the county level."

Most of the transactions are anonymous, said Albert, because sellers either don't want to upset existing distribution channels or tip their hand to other companies and customers in the industry. Many sellers, for example, are using the website to explore other markets, extend market reach and move additional products quickly and cheaply.

"This is not set up just for excess inventory, although that was the original idea," said Albert. "Most of the stuff that is being sold is being sold in season and it is not excess product."

Buyers
XSTurf buyers will primarily be end-users.

"The only reason you would want to buy on our site is because you are saving money," said Albert.

Superintendents will not only be able to take advantage of competitive pricing, they will also be able to set their own prices. "Buyers can name their price and any seller can choose to meet that price," said Albert.

Quality control is also a priority. The site deals in standard goods only and they must come in the manufacturer's original packaging. The buyer has 48 hours to inspect the goods before XS Inc. releases the money from the escrow account to the seller.

"If it is not precisely what the customer ordered, all he has to do is call us and we take it from there. He doesn't have to worry about it at all," said Albert.

From the time the deal is finished, shipping time is usually seven to 10 days, although the company is working to get that down to two to three days for shipments under 150 pounds and four to six days for larger shipments.

COMPETITION

Although there are already a

Continued on page 36



Harry Albert



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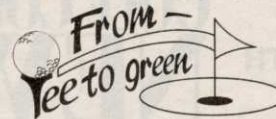
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XSTurf.com

Continued from 36

number of e-commerce initiatives targeting the golf course market, Albert contends that XSTurf already has an advantage because it offers anonymity, the security of escrow accounts and so many ways to sell products.

"There is the catalog model which lists manufacturer's products at list prices," said Albert. "But if I am a buyer why do I want to buy from the site for the same or higher prices? There is convenience, but not much value."

As far as the request-for-quote model, Albert dismissed that as "great for the buyer, but bad for the seller—since the buyer is not committed the seller has little incentive to respond."

XSTurf aims to penetrate all courses that have an annual budget of at least \$100,000 for chemicals, seeds and parts—an estimated 10,000 courses.

Morgan Stanley invested \$20 million in the company in December, and the company is in another round of strategic financing right now with Credit Suisse First Boston.

In preparation for the launch of XSTurf.com, the company will be adding turf seed and equipment experts.

Going forward, Albert is confident. "This is not just a theory," he said. "We have proven that the free market exchange is the most efficient market mechanism leading to the best way to move inventory and reduce the over all costs for the end user." ■

GOLF COURSE MARKETPLACE

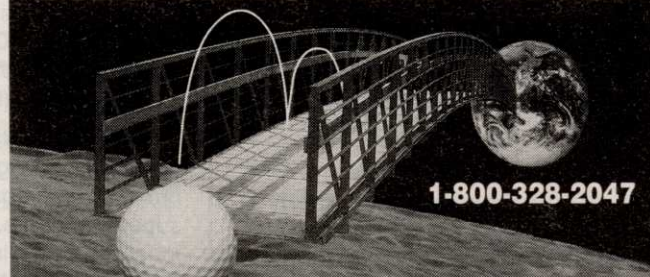
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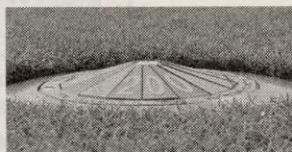
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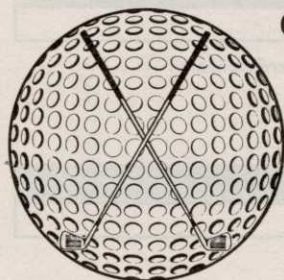


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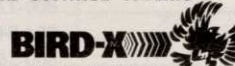
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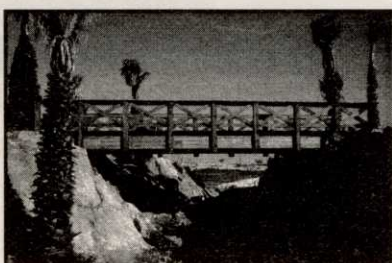
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800-873-8873.

14-16 — *Penn State Golf Turf Con-
ference.* Contact 814-863-3475.

Simplot additions

Continued from page 31

hold on to that," said Whitacre. "In
Phoenix integration is beginning
already. And in Kentucky, we are
all around it, so that will be one that
we will be developing consolida-
tion plans for."

On the turfgrass side, Simplot
T&H has picked up hot-selling L-93
creeping bentgrass, Southshore
creeping bentgrass, Jamestown II
chewings fescue, and Jaguar 3 turf-
type tall fescue. The company now
has all the distribution facilities,
growing contracts, germ plasm and
related genetic research for these
turfgrass varieties.

These new assets are already
being integrated, said Whitacre.
"We were very strategic with the
assets that we purchased. They are
complimentary to our existing vari-
eties," he said. "We were putting
business plans together around
these varieties 90 days ago."

According to Whitacre, these va-
rieties will be available through in-
dependent seed companies and dis-
tributors as well as through Simplot
Partners. "We will hit the market in
a number of different channels," he
said. "There are some market
niches where we'll need more than
one point of access." ■

Periodicals postage paid at Yarmouth, Maine,
and additional mailing office. *Golf Course News*
(ISSN 1054-0644) is published monthly by
United Publications, Inc., 106 Lafayette St.,
P.O. Box 997, Yarmouth, ME 04096. Phone
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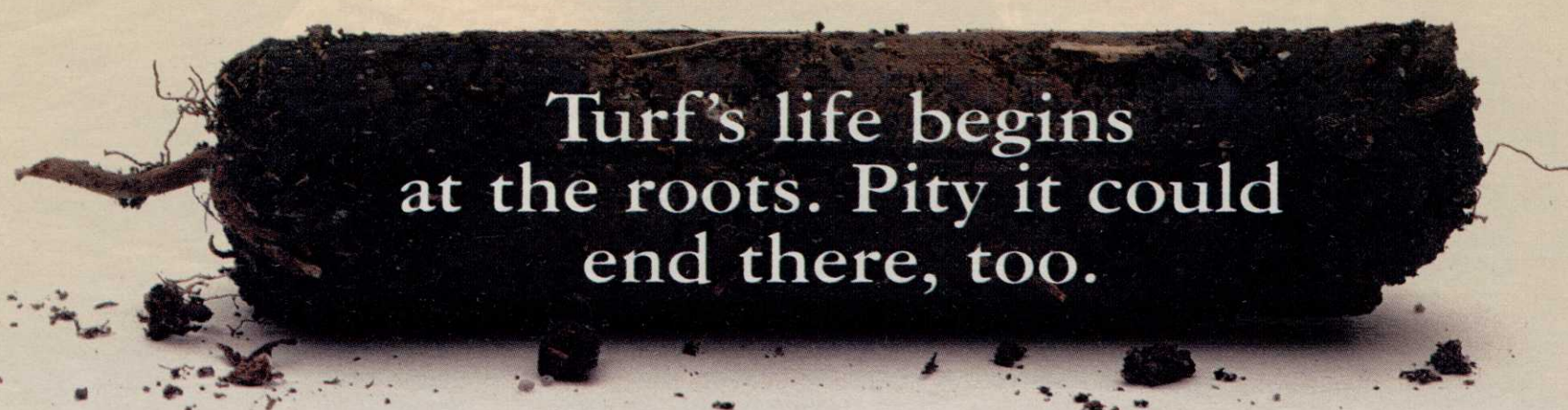
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