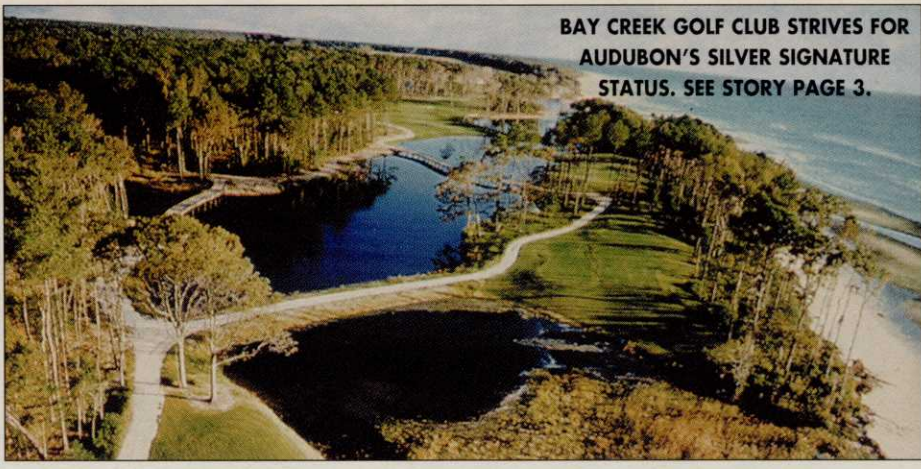


# GOLF COURSE NEWS



BAY CREEK GOLF CLUB STRIVES FOR AUDUBON'S SILVER SIGNATURE STATUS. SEE STORY PAGE 3.

THE NEWSPAPER FOR THE GOLF COURSE INDUSTRY

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Golf Course News takes a look at what's new in pesticides, herbicides and fungicides.....32

## Secondary turf equipment market facing growing pains

By ANDREW OVERBECK

With the popularity of leasing turf equipment surging over the past five years, the market for used equipment has expanded as well. Industry insiders estimate that the used market now exceeds \$90 million in annual sales and will continue to grow as more equipment comes off leases.

Sales figures, however, do not tell the whole story. The industry is still learning how to approach the secondary turf market. While high residuals make leasing



A three- to four-year-old John Deere ProConditioned 3235 fairway mower (left) retails for around \$22,000, compared to \$36,000 for a brand-new 3235B model. It comes with a one-year warranty.

packages more attractive, they make it more difficult for dealers and wholesale brokers to unload used equipment at a reasonable profit. In order for leases to grow, there

Continued on page 35

## Chicago credit giant to finance golf

By JAY FINEGAN

CHICAGO — A new source of capital has entered the golf industry, and this one comes with deep pockets.

Heller Financial, a \$20-billion credit firm, recently established a golf lending group with plans to fill some of the void created when Bank of America abandoned the golf-financing field last fall.



Christy Lockridge

Ironically, two of the key players in the new Heller golf brain trust have sailed in from Bank of America. Rick Nekoroski, who completed \$275 million in golf course investments for Bank of America, will handle the eastern half of the country from Boston. And John Seeburger, a West Coast loan officer for B of A, will take charge of the action in the western United States from his office in Costa Mesa, Calif., south of Los Angeles. Both men will hold the title of vice president and investment officer.

Real estate specialist Christy Lockridge, an 11-year Heller veteran, has been named product manager for the golf lending group. She will direct the

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SUPERINTENDENT FOR THE "BIG DIG"

After roaming the globe building golf courses most of his life, Massachusetts native Gary Kessener, 42, has returned home to oversee construction of one of the most ambitious golf projects ever undertaken in the United States — Quarry Hills Golf Course. The John Sanford design is taking shape just outside Boston. The story begins on page 13.

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Photo by Freddi Bird

The third hole at Wolf Creek GC, 80 miles north of Las Vegas

## Wolf Creek offers high drama in Nevada desert

By DOUG SAUNDERS

MESQUITE, Nev. — The fairways of the recently opened Wolf Creek Golf Club pour through the stark desert terrain like green lava flowing through the landscape. Their stunning contrast against the multi-colored sandstone cliffs creates a spectacular setting that begs a golfer to come out and play in this high desert setting in southeastern Nevada.

Your first thoughts are: how could a

Continued on page 24

## Drought-stricken N'west faces dry summer

By JOEL JOYNER

SPOKANE, Wash. — The Northwest is confronting record-low water levels that may result in some severe shortages this summer. The drought also has potentially serious implications for energy-starved California, which relies on hydroelectric power from the Northwest.

In March, Washington Gov. Gary Locke declared a drought emergency for the state. According to Scott Gudes, acting administrator of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), the Northwest is the most drought-stricken region of the United States.

Continued on page 12

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Bogey, resident Labrador retriever  
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# Bay Creek shoots for Audubon's 'silver signature'

By JAY FINEGAN

CAPE CHARLES, Va. — The new Bay Creek Golf Club here takes a back seat to nobody in the realm of environmental protection.

Right from the start of construction, Audubon International has been close to the action, making sure this 1,700-acre complex treads lightly on the waterfront ecology of an area where the Chesapeake Bay meets the Atlantic Ocean.

Bay Creek, a visually stunning property, will feature an Arnold Palmer-designed course, slated to open June 1. A Jack Nicklaus signature layout will come next, along with a 224-slip deep-water marina and an upscale residential community.

**GOING BY THE RECIPE**

The Palmer course, stretching to 7,244 yards, has set the pace as Bay Creek guns for "silver signature" status in the Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary Program (ACSP).

The silver designation is reserved for landowners for whom Audubon International develops a natural resource management plan, geared mainly to water and wildlife issues.

Bay Creek project manager Tom Saunders said that going for the silver designation isn't that tough, once you make the commitment. "You just go by the recipe they give you," he said. "Audubon works with you pretty well. It's expensive, but we felt this was the right way to go."

**BUILDING SPECIFICATIONS**

"You start the process with Audubon as early as possible," said Saunders, who joined with owner and developer Baymark Construction almost three years ago. "For the gold signature program, they would have to be involved in the course design, but we didn't get started early enough. Baymark had the plans from the Palmer Course Design Company before I even came on board.

"In the silver program," he said, "Audubon gets involved in the construction. They've got a lot of specs for how you do things and build things. We took their information and added it to the specs for the building contractors. So Palmer Design was involved primarily in changes to the grassing plan. Landscapes Unlimited,

water quality," Saunders said. "You do a lot of additional planning and take additional measures with drainage from greens and bunkers to make sure everything gets filtered as many times as possible. So it kind of complicated part of the construction process, and it complicated the grassing process."



Bay Creek Golf Club, opening June 1, sits at the intersection of Chesapeake Bay and the Atlantic Ocean.

the general contractor, had to pull off the actual design modifications to accommodate Audubon."

**CART PATHS OF CRUSHED SHELLS**

For starters, Bay Creek planted more than 2,500 large trees and installed nesting boxes for waterfowl. In keeping with Audubon's criteria, Landscapes Unlimited used natural materials, such as crushed shells, as permeable paving for cart paths that go near the water.

"Most of the requirements deal with

Instead of running turfgrass right to the water's edge, for example, the builders planted different kinds of vegetation to create filter strips along the lakes and ponds. Also, the layout was altered to maintain wildlife habitat zones—not isolated pockets but continuous zones that run around the perimeter of the property.

"We haven't been 100 percent successful in that," Saunders said. "But we've certainly done a better job because of the Audubon program. It's good not just for the

golf courses, but for the whole Bay Creek development."

**POLLUTION-PROOF MAINTENANCE BUILDING**

One big difference between the regular ACSP and the silver signature program deals with maintenance buildings. Audubon weighed in heavily on requirements for Bay Creek's 8,000-square-foot facility.

"They were very involved in how it was designed, particularly how you catch clippings when you wash vehicles, how you recycle that water, how you handle the fueling station, how you handle your chemical and fertilizer storage," Saunders said. "They had a lot of input in the location, design and construction of that facility."

Fueling stations, for instance, have to be covered to prevent rainwater from washing spills into the soil. Water falling off vehicles on an outdoor "wash pad" is treated, cleaned and recycled by a special machine to make sure there's no runoff. Chemicals must be mixed indoors, so nothing is spilled on the ground. "The whole thing is very tight," Saunders said.

**12 HOLES ON THE WATER**

The Palmer course is more than halfway to silver signature certification, and Saunders has few doubts about winning the designation. "When our course opens in June," he said, "it will offer an extraordinary golf experience, including 18 challenging and exciting holes of golf and an unparalleled environment in which to play them."

Number three is the signature hole, a 439-yard par-4 with three fairway bunkers and a 100-yard carry over water to a rock-walled green. A backdrop of tall, slender trees looms behind the green and separates the hole from the beach on the Chesapeake.

All told, four holes are on the Chesapeake, eight are on Old Plantation Creek, and several are framed by giant sand dunes.

Both the Palmer and the Nicklaus courses will be semi-private, offering daily-fee play.

## Pebble Beach unseats Pine Valley as #1

PEBBLE BEACH, Calif. — Pebble Beach Golf Links has taken the top spot in *Golf Digest's* ranking of the 100 best golf courses in the country. This represents the first time that Pebble Beach has achieved the number-one ranking.

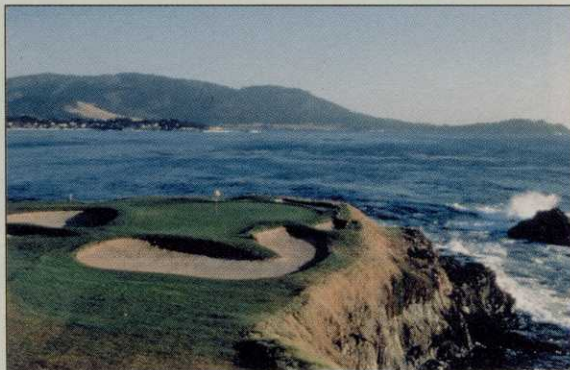
In this year's rankings, *Golf Digest* noted that the recent addition of a new par-3 fifth hole (expanding the golf course to nine holes on the Pacific Ocean), improved course conditioning, and high scores in the area of tradition helped Pebble Beach surpass Pine Valley, which had held the top spot since 1985.

The top four awards in *Golf Digest's* rankings for 2001 were, in order of ranking: Pebble Beach, Pine Valley, Augusta National and Cypress Point.

"We are very proud of the customer service initiatives we've introduced, especially our pace of play initiative where we have seen the average time for a round of golf drop from approximately five hours and 15 minutes to almost four hours and 35 minutes," said Peter

Ueberroth, co-chairman of the new ownership group that acquired Pebble Beach Company in 1999.

Pebble Beach Resorts is comprised of three hotels: The Lodge at Pebble Beach, The Inn at Spanish Bay, and



Seventh hole at Pebble Beach

the newest addition, Casa Palmero; and four golf courses: Pebble Beach Golf Links, Spyglass Hill Golf Course, The Links at Spanish Bay, and Del Monte Golf Course; and the recently opened Spa at Pebble Beach.

Located 120 miles south of San Francisco, Pebble Beach is part of the famed Monterey Peninsula.

## Nelson & Haworth crafting 700-yard holes on the edge of the Himalayas

By ANDREW OVERBECK

LJIANG, China — Size does matter. To compensate for the extreme altitude, Robin Nelson and Neil Haworth's latest project in China, Jade Mountain Snow Dragon International Golf Course, will be 8,500 yards long. The course is situated at 10,000 feet elevation in the bottom of the valley of Shangri-La in Yunnan Province.

"The altitude has some interesting effects on the golf ball," said Haworth. "It spins less — both side spin and back spin — and because the air is much thinner it travels much further."

Nelson and Haworth designed the course in conjunction with China's top pro golfer, Zhang Lian Wei. "During design and development we spent a couple of days on site with him hitting balls. He was flying the ball about 20 percent further on all shots, maybe slightly more on drives," Haworth said.

As a result, Haworth designed the course longer. The longest par-5 is 735

yards, the longest par-4 is 525 yards and the longest par-3 is 270 yards.

**BEGINNERS CAN PLAY, TOO**

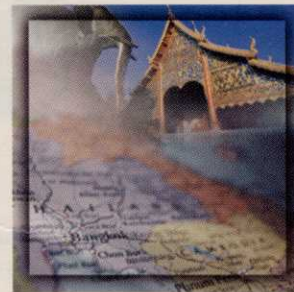
"However, we also realize that the average golfer does not get the same advantage as the pro, especially the beginning golfer who rolls the ball on the ground," said Haworth. "Therefore the middle and forward tees play to the typical yardage that you would find at sea level."

The gently rolling site has great views of the surrounding mountains and several holes play through a former "Tibetan Village" area and 100-year-old pine forests. "The course takes

advantage of the spectacular views as much as possible," he said. "Since the scale of the site is huge, the scale of the features are also big and strong. The lines of the course are definite without any busy shaping."

**CONSTRUCTION CHALLENGES**

Fifteen holes at the course are shaped, and seeding recently began. The main



Continued on page 6

## Booth, Faxon team up in Rhode Island

By ANDREW OVERBECK

MIDDLETOWN, R.I. — Golf course architect Brad Booth has joined forces with PGA Tour player Brad Faxon to design the West Course here at Newport National GC. The West Course will open for play in 2003 and join the Arthur Hills-designed East Course, which is currently under construc-

tion and due to open in 2002.

Newport National represents the first of what could be many projects designed by both Booth and Faxon.

"We have already talked about doing more stuff together," said Booth, whose design offices are based in Ogunquit, Maine.

Getting Faxon on board was a

major marketing coup for developers Newport National Golf Club LLC, since he is a native of Rhode Island.

"He has some name cachet in New England," said Booth. "And it works out great because he comes back for a week every month, so he will be able to visit the site often."

Booth and Faxon's work on the West Course is just getting underway. Both are still feeling out their budding design relationship.

"I am doing the basic routing plans right now, and when Brad is back we sit down and spend a day or two going over that stuff," Booth said. "He is a neophyte on the design end, so this is a learning experience for him. But he has a wealth of information from playing

Continued on page 6



(Left to right) Faxon, Todd Arterburn, and Booth look at plans

## Sea Marsh earns Audubon certification

By JOEL JOYNER

HILTON HEAD ISLAND, S.C. — The Sea Marsh Course, located here at the Sea Pines resort, has been certified by Audubon International as a member of the Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary System. It is the second course at the facility to be recognized for environmental protection.

According to Carol Thompson, staff ecologist at Audubon International, superintendent Jim Cregan and his two assistants — John Michnuk and Rich Fioretto — and Sea Pines EcoTour instructors Aaron Black and Carl Zies have gone above and beyond certification requirements. "They're doing a great job," said Thompson, "We require 80 percent of landscape plans to be native, and they've done 100 percent."

"Since joining the program, they've gone from buffering eight percent of their shorelines to 25 percent," she added. "That's a big improvement."

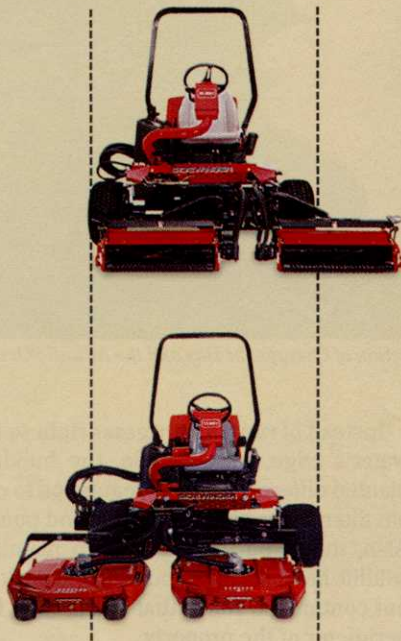
### WILDLIFE IDENTIFIED

The Sea Pines Ocean Course, the first course built on the island, was the fifth course in the state to be Audubon certified. "We have a great public relations program running, and that's what the Audubon society is looking for," said Cregan. "Since the Ocean course was certified back in June of 1999, we've been trying to find new ideas to promote environmental awareness."

Wildlife throughout the resort was identified and labeled so that information could be provided to members and guests. "We're so blessed with an abundance of wildlife here," Cregan said. "There are about 20 species of birds that we see on a daily basis. We've built shelters for everything from purple martins and blue birds to bats and screeching owls."

The third course at the resort, Harbour Town, has taken its own steps toward Audubon certification on the heels of the annual PGA Tour's Worldcom Classic. "Our announcement has sparked a lot of interest in the area," said Cregan. "I've had at least five superintendents call me to find out how to get

Continued on page 6



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## Children's Golf Foundation building facility for disabled kids

By ANDREW OVERBECK

WEST PALM BEACH, Fla. — The Children's Golf Foundation is set to open the country's first golf learning facility built specifically for handicapped children. The \$300,000 project marks the culmination of 12 years of hard work to construct a permanent facility for

the program's activities.

"We needed a non-conventional facility to teach a conventional game," said Keith Stuhler, CEO of the foundation. "If you are physically challenged, golf is hard enough to learn. We are going to teach them in a relaxed, non-competitive environment, which is es-

sential for our kids."

The foundation provides weekly golf lessons for more than 200 disabled children each week. "Golf is positive for them because it shows them that they can do something that they didn't think they could do," Stuhler said.

He estimates that there are 20,000 special education stu-

dents in Palm Beach County alone that will be served by the new facility.

### A SPECIAL DESIGN

The 15-acre facility was designed by Stuhler, a PGA professional, with handicapped needs in mind.

"We know what the kids are capable of," he said. "We left out



Children's Golf Foundation teaches the game of golf to handicapped kids.

the tees because of mobility issues. There are no impediments and most of the course is under a two degree slope."

The facility, which is being built on a former landfill, will include a 25,000-square-foot teeing area, an 8,000-square-foot putting green and a 3,000-square-foot clubhouse. The driving range provides four holes of varying length.

"I designed a 15-yard hole that runs downhill so that if they even touch the ball they will have some positive reinforcement of hitting the green," Stuhler said.

In addition to the short hole, there is a 115-yard par-3, a 235-yard dogleg par-4, and a straight away 295-yard par-4. "We needed to have a two-shot hole to teach them that golf was not just about par-3s," he said.

### DONATIONS MADE IT POSSIBLE

The project was made possible through the fundraising work of Stuhler and other donations and grants. Palm Beach County is leasing the foundation the land for one dollar a year and the USGA, the First Tee, the George S. May Foundation and Dorothy Campbell provided the primary funding for the project. The facility will be named Tam O'Shanter Golf and Learning Center as a tribute to George S. May who staged the 1950 World Open at the original Tam O'Shanter Golf Club in Nilus, Ill.

In addition, the foundation has received a lot of support from the golf course industry. Jerry Pierman of Frontier Golf Construction built the course for a drastically reduced fee and Simmons & White donated civil engineering services. Haverland Nurseries, Hector Turf Co. and Mike Roach Irrigation have also contributed to the project. Bryan Plummer, superintendent at Ironhorse Country Club, is overseeing the grow-in of the facility and will assist in the day to day maintenance once Tam O'Shanter opens.

Construction is now wrapping up and Tam O'Shanter is due to start teaching handicapped children to play golf by the beginning of the summer.



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## Nelson, Haworth

Continued from page 3

challenge, according to Haworth, has been scheduling around the wet and dry seasons. "We have to follow a tight schedule because if we miss the seeding season for any of the holes, then the whole project will be delayed one year."

The course is being constructed mainly with local labor and some local shapers. Haworth has Glen Nadal, their top shaper, on site to keep the course true to the design.

The course will have Penn A-1 bentgrass on the greens and Penncross on the tees

with a Kentucky bluegrass blend on the fairways. Out of play areas will be re-established with native wildflowers.

### UNESCO SITE

Lijiang has been recognized by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization as a heritage site. The city, which is a 30-minute flight from Kunming, features architecture from another era with cobblestone streets and houses dating back several centuries. It is also the center for the Naxi Chinese minority, who number less than 250,000 and are the only remaining culture in the world still using pictograms as their form

of writing.

The town has long been a popular tourist destination for the Chinese and more flights are being added. It is also becoming a destination for Asian tour groups and backpackers, and the developers hope to attract the golfing tourist. In addition to the five-star resort hotel and villas planned for the development, there are several four-star hotels in the area. ■



Future site of the 10th hole for the 8,500-yard layout

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## Sea Marsh

Continued from page 4

the ball rolling for their own courses."

### 600 ACRES PRESERVED

The resort puts nature first.

"We have 600 acres of wildlife preserve here," the superintendent said. "I've put together an environmental resource committee that includes environmental activists who have also jumped on board. We're trying to get as many people involved as possible and have received more positive feedback than we ever imagined possible when we first began with our Ocean Course five years ago."

The golf course abuts some private backyards, and Cregan has spruced up the borders. "The out of bound stakes were the only things that separated the two," he said. "Flower beds have now been added and native grasses also line the lagoons to provide natural corridors for birds.

"We've tried to increase the aesthetics of the course. Our flowers have attracted a lot of butterflies that have always held a fascination with our members and guest. We see a number of people that visit from places like Pennsylvania that have never seen a herring or an egret before in their life, let alone an alligator," said Cregan. ■

## Booth, Faxon

Continued from page 4

courses across the world and has a good sense and feeling for design."

### GOLF IN THE VINEYARD

The West Course at Newport National will be set on mildly rolling farmland with hedge breaks.

"The course has been given the moniker of the 'vineyards' because it is right next to Newport Vineyards," said Booth. "It will be an upscale resort-style course and will have open spaces. I will work within the topography of the site."

The course will feature wall-to-wall bentgrass. Construction is scheduled to start in 2002.

### BOOTH STAYING BUSY

In addition to the work at Newport National, Booth is staying busy with projects across the United States and Canada. He is continuing renovation work at Samoset Resort Golf Course in Rockport, Maine; expanding and renovating a course for Orange County Parks and Recreation Department in New York; and work on a par-3 course at Apple Hill Golf Club in East Kingston, N.H.

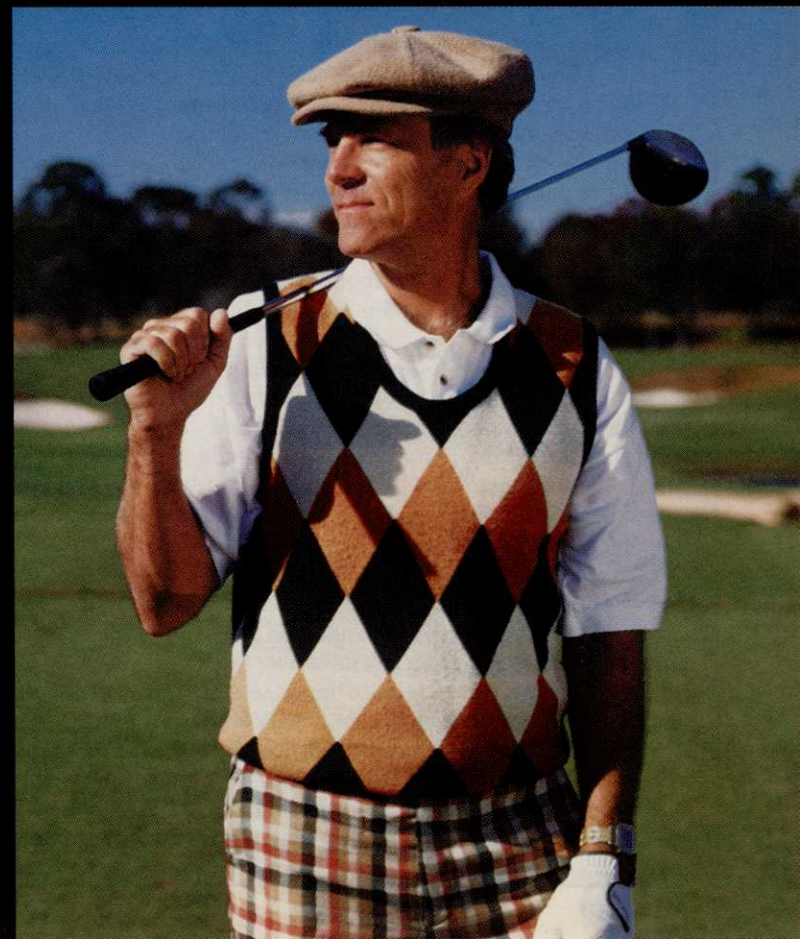
Construction work is also due to start this year on a Booth design at Deep Brook Golf Club in Saco, Maine, and renovation should also begin soon at Intervale Country Club in Manchester, N.H. ■



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## Caddyshack III: the boys on the bag come back

The crusade to recruit a greater number of junior golfers is going strong. The First Tee and other programs around the country are steadily bringing more kids out to play. But there's another way to encourage youngsters to take up the game, and it's one that gets short shrift. I speak of caddies.

For decades, the caddyshack crew of high school and college kids was a golf course fixture. But motorized golf cars pretty much spelled doom for caddies, and with their demise, golf lost something important.



Jay Finegan, editor

"We think caddying provides great mentoring for kids," says Dave Norman, executive director of the Virginia State Golf Association (VSGA). "It's an opportunity for kids to be with respectable people on the golf course. It gives them contacts in the community. Also, it helps them develop knowledge of the game and a love for it."

### THE 'CORPS OF CADDIES'

That was definitely true in my case. The summer I was 14, my mom dropped me off every morning at a local country club. The caddyshack was ruled by a retired Army drill sergeant who called us his "corps of caddies."

As a rookie, I knew nothing about the game. Consequently, I was purely a pack animal on the course. When a member asked me which club to hit, I'd stare at the bag with no more comprehension than if he'd asked me to speak Chinese.

But caddies got to play the course on Mondays, and by that Labor Day I'd learned something about golf and was determined to stick with it. Indeed, this was a time-honored way of getting into the game. Some of golf's great-

est players - including Ben Hogan, Sam Snead and Byron Nelson - got their start in caddy yards.

Kids today don't often get the same opportunity. Of the 285 courses in Dave Norman's association, for example, only about 10 percent offer caddie programs.

### SPEEDING UP THE PACE OF PLAY

But now there are signs of a resurgence. According to *The Golf Insider*, a travel newsletter, the best golf trend of 2000 was the return of the caddie. Numerous high-end resort courses now make caddies "inclusive" - their pay is included in the green fee.

Even some public courses, such as the new Lost Canyons complex near Los Ange-

building private clubs," Granuzzo says. "They want the best high-end golf experience, and caddies are synonymous with that."

Some of Caddie Master's client courses have 150 to 300 caddies, including lawyers, doctors, accountants, military personnel, college students and teachers. "It comes down to a love of the game," says Granuzzo. "It's good physical exercise and in most cases you get playing privileges."

### A TANGIBLE ADVANTAGE

"From the standpoint of the escalating price of golf," Granuzzo adds, "these high-end clubs are being challenged to add value while they add rate. Some of these courses are next door to each other, and they're all seeking a competitive advantage. They want something that can't easily be duplicated, so they're turning to personal service. And the only vehicle left out there is a caddie program.

"From a positioning standpoint, it's fantastic," he adds. "With a caddie providing local knowledge on a tough course, you can save



Caddies employed by Caddie Master sport uniforms.

a lot of balls and as much as an hour."

### START SLOW, GROW SLOW

After eight years at the helm of Caddie Master, Granuzzo has some advice for clubs looking to establish their own programs: start small and promote heavily.

"Start with five caddies, not 15," he says. "Get them steady work. And promote, promote, promote - in the club newsletter, though postings in the locker room and, most importantly, behind the counter in the

Continued on next page

## Emphasize attitude over skills in hiring strategy

By HARRIS M. PLOTKIN

A few months ago, I gave a talk at the GCSAA conference in Dallas. I have given this talk - "Taking the Guesswork Out of Hiring" - for over 25 years to a variety of organizations, including virtually every type of golf association.

Over the years, we have helped several thousand clients do a better job of identifying applicants to get the right person into the right job, and with the right attitude. We have learned quite a bit about what our clients are looking for in a good front-line employee.

For the most part, too many clients have been hiring the wrong type of people because they have emphasized the need for skills and experience. In front-line employees, attitude is more important than skills and experience. Will they show up every day? Will they work hard? Will they be nice to customers, members or their guests? Can they get along with their coworkers?

### NOT ROCKET SCIENCE

I was planning to give the superintendents my usual talk - that it is more important to hire for attitude and aptitude than it is for skills and experience. You can teach most people how to set a table, how to cut grass, how to do the basic things so that they learn the skills and eventually gather experience. But try to teach someone to have a better attitude. If you have raised children or have a significant other, you know what I'm talking about.

To make sure I wasn't steering them wrong, I spent several hours in the exhibit hall interviewing all the major equipment

manufacturers, especially those whose equipment looked complicated.

In interviewing these folks, here's what I found out:

- Every salesman or engineer that I talked to, except one, said that if you can drive a car you can drive any of their equipment.
- It would take no more than 30 minutes to an hour to train anybody how to operate their equipment.
- One gentleman said it would require eight hours to train someone to operate his equipment.
- Some provided videos to show how their equipment works, so superintendents could train their people by simply showing them the video and discussing it with them.
- Some provided training material in Spanish. Most of them didn't have it, but said they could provide it.
- Besides training them, the equipment salespeople said it would be useful if the superintendent also went out with them for a few hours to make sure they were using the equipment properly. He could also show them how he wants the greens cut or the fairways seeded, and so on.

What does this tell you? It's obvious. It doesn't take a rocket scientist to learn how to operate this equipment. You can teach almost anybody what is important in an hour, and then spend a few hours on the course to show them how you want it done.

Therefore, in lieu of skills and experience, it is more important to hire someone with a great attitude, who will be there for you day after day, do a workman like job, and get along with everybody they encounter.

During my talk, I emphasized the use of a pre-employment attitude test that most of our golf superintendent clients use to

Continued on next page



Harris Plotkin

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## WIGA proposes course accessibility policy for impaired

By ANDREW OVERBECK

LOS ALTOS, Calif. — In an effort to reduce the increasing abuse of the current medical or "red flag" system used by golf courses to identify disabled golfers, the Walking Impaired Golfer's Association of America (WIGA) is proposing a new set of rules that would better identify those with walking impairments.

WIGA decided that a rule change was in order after its 2000 study showed that 81 percent of golf courses surveyed said that they needed a system to identify golfers with walking impairments. (See chart)

"The red-flag system was discriminatory against the golfer with walking impairments," said Fred Montgomery, chairman of WIGA. "Those using the red flag could be some-

avoid all wet and restricted areas.

The new blue flag proposed by WIGA would identify the golfer with severe walking impairments who cannot walk 50 yards, cumulative. The blue-flagged carts would be able to drive to the ball on any fairway using the 90-degree rule, making the effort to use cart paths wherever possible. The golfer must, however, remain five yards from all bunkers and a minimum of five yards from putting surface and greenside bunkers and must avoid wet areas.

Under the new rules, use of adaptive golf carts will be limited to those who are unable to walk and/or stand while playing golf. The cart will be allowed to drive anywhere on the golf course, including accessible bunkers and putting surfaces.

According to Montgomery, golf courses should expect golfers with walking impairments to complete their rounds in a time similar to the times of able-bodied golfers.

### FORMALIZING THE RULES

WIGA, which does golf course accessibility surveys for golf courses in terms of ADA requirements, has already introduced the two flag system at all four courses at Pebble Beach.

Montgomery also presented his proposal at the National Forum for Accessible Golf at Clemson University in April and hopes that this will be the first step to the nationwide implementation of the new rules. "I have been inundated with requests for information," he said. "Course operators and superintendents are looking for a solution that reduces the abuse of the red-flag system while providing for the needs of walking impaired golfers."

### GOLF COURSE ACCESSIBILITY STUDY

- NEED A SYSTEM TO IDENTIFY GOLFERS WITH WALKING IMPAIRMENTS:  
DEFINITELY YES - 81 PERCENT  
DON'T REALLY KNOW - 19 PERCENT
- AWARE OF HOW ADA LAW AFFECTS YOUR FACILITY:  
YES - 28.6 PERCENT  
NO - 71.4 PERCENT
- UNDERSTAND THAT "TOTAL ACCESS" INCLUDES GREENS  
YES - 38 PERCENT  
NO - 61.9 PERCENT

Source: 2000 WIGA survey

### SEEING RED AND BLUE

The new rules introduced by WIGA would create a two-tiered system of red and blue flags as well as rules governing the use of adaptive golf carts.

The red flag would represent golfers with moderate walking impairments who can walk a minimum of 50 yards and comply with course rules applicable to red flag use. A red-flagged cart would be able to drive to the ball in the fairway (turf conditions permitting) using the 90-degree rule. The cart must also remain on cart paths around all tees and greens, 50 yards from the front of the putting surface, five yards from the edge of all fairway bunkers, and it must

## Boys on the bag

Continued from previous page

pro shop."

As those five caddies improve and word spreads, so does demand.

"Don't overreact," Granuzzo cautions. "Instead of five, maybe you need six or seven. Just add one or two at a time. If you recruit 10 and only have demand for six, you've got to split up the work too much. You dilute the talent pool.

"That makes the customer experience worse, which negates demand," he adds. "It's a negative vortex, and you end up losing everybody. But when you start slow and grow slow, you'll be able to figure out what kind of program your club can support."

### CADDIE STARTING TIMES

Dave Norman adds another bit of wisdom. He plans to launch a caddie training program next summer at Independence Golf Club, a VSGA-owned complex in Richmond. It will focus on youths age 14 to 21.

Norman knows the major pitfalls of caddie programs.

"When caddies sit around all day and never get a loop, they get disillusioned," he says. "We propose to tackle that by having caddie starting times. If you book during those times, you'd have to take a caddie.

"We'd run those between 8 a.m. and 9 a.m. and between 1:30 p.m. and 2:30 p.m. on weekends. The caddies could go out twice," he explains. "With a system like that, they know they'll get a bag. We'll also provide forecaddies if the players prefer to ride."

Norman hopes to make his caddie training program a statewide resource. "We want to offer caddies at our member clubs," he says, "because we feel it's an integral part of the game. It helps the local employment scene. And it's a great way to get kids involved in golf." ■

## Hiring

Continued from previous page

judge whether an individual is dependable, hard working, flexible and service-oriented. Most clients use that and, in addition, some also use our "honesty test." However, I don't see honesty as an issue for most golf course maintenance employees.

Another very good way to screen out people, and save yourself a lot of time and trouble, is to ask that person to meet you at 5 a.m. at the cart barn, or wherever the superintendent's office is located.

Emphasize that if the job candidate is one minute late, you are not going to hire him.

That way, you will

quickly find out those who can get up early enough to come to work at 5 a.m., and how much they want that job. That, in addition to checking references, and using good, validated legal tests to determine other characteristics that are important to you, would substantially reduce the high turnover that golf course superintendents have been having over the years. ■

*Harris (Hank) Plotkin is the author of "Building A Winning Team," and creator of the "Above and Beyond" customer-service training program designed exclusively for the club industry. He is the founder of The Plotkin Group, a 33-year-old management consulting and training firm.*



### MAILBAG

#### IS PURGATORY LONGEST COURSE?

Dear Golf Course News,

I read each issue with interest and pleasure, as I find your coverage to be the broadest in the industry. I did, however, stop short when I arrived at the story about Purgatory Golf Club, which characterized it as "the longest course east of the Mississippi."

I believe the International, in Bolton, Mass., holds that distinction at 8,325 yards from the back tees. Of course, its par is 77 from that set of tees. The next set measures 7,200 to 7,300. Since you didn't mention the par at Purgatory,

I may well be splitting hairs, but I didn't want our New England course to go unrecognized.

Sincerely,  
Arthur Little  
Proprietor, Province Lake GC  
South Effingham, N.H.

#### GEOGRAPHY LESSON

Greetings:

I read your interesting story in the March issue. This article discusses Total Golf adding three courses in Michigan, my home state. I've played these courses and they are very nice, especially in the fall season, with the colors on the trees. However, these courses and the Leelanau Peninsula are not in Michigan's Upper Peninsula, as the article notes. They do sit on a peninsula on the western side of the state amongst many apple orchards and naturally, surrounded by water on three sides. There are many courses in upper Michigan, which is a peninsula in its own right, but not the courses mentioned in your article. Just thought I'd pass along that little tid-bit of information and correction. I like your publication and find it very interesting reading.

Best Regards,  
Mike Schultz, Eagle Eye Golf Associates

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## BRIEFS

### MAGNUM RESIGNS FROM GCSAA BOARD OF DIRECTORS, HEINE JOINS

DULUTH, Ga. — GCSAA president Tommy Witt has accepted the resignation of Ken Magnum from the board of directors. Magnum, first elected to the board in February 1996, will be devoting more time to his position as director of golf courses and grounds here at the Atlanta Athletic Club. Upcoming events such as the 2001 PGA Championship this August, the U.S. Junior Amateur in July 2002 and a remodeling of the Riverside course in 2003 were cited by Magnum as demanding his full attention. Witt has appointed Ricky Heine, superintendent at the Golf Club Star Ranch in Austin, Texas, to fill the position. Heine narrowly lost his campaign for a GCSAA board position last February.



Ricky Heine

### GIESELER NAMED SUPER AT BEAR'S BEST

DALLAS, Texas — ClubCorp has named Dan Gieseler, CGCS, as the superintendent at Bear's Best Las Vegas, scheduled to open next fall. A second-generation superintendent, he joined ClubCorp in 1976, serving at several of the company's country clubs in Texas and California. Gieseler is already on site at his new course, which is still under construction. The Bear's Best public access courses — another one is being built in Atlanta — have been designed specifically for group play and corporate entertainment.

### SCOTT LEAVES WINGED FOOT FOR BACK BROOK

RINGOES, N.J. — Mike Scott has been hired as superintendent at the Ridge at Back Brook, a new Tom Fazio design unfolding on 300 acres in central New Jersey, northwest of Princeton. Scott was most recently head superintendent at Winged Foot Golf Club (N.Y.).

### GOLFSUPERSEARCH.COM OFFERS FREE SERVICE

HARVARD, Mass. — A new Web site, designed specifically for golf course superintendents, has been launched here by Harvard Golf Partners. The site, located at [www.golfsupersearch.com](http://www.golfsupersearch.com), offers a no-cost service to superintendents searching for new positions.

## Brutal winter leaves major mess for Northeast superintendents

By JOEL JOYNER

WESTON, Mass. — A winter that came in like a lion and left like a lion has left behind a major mess for superintendents in the Northeast.

"It was a cold, cold, cold winter, a big departure from the weather experienced the past two seasons," said USGA agronomist Darin Bevard. "Winterkill probably is the biggest issue right now."

Wet, heavy accumulations of snow, well above average in most places, now bring flood worries. The concerns of snowmelt flooding have focused on areas in southern Maine, all of Vermont, New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Connecticut, parts of New York state along Lake Champlain and the Hudson River, northern New Jersey and northeastern Pennsylvania, according to the National Weather Service.

Moreover, prolonged ice on greens — for 60 days or more — has left courses in grim shape for the season opening. "We've had severe ice build up this year," said superintendent Jeff Corcoran here at the Weston Golf Club. "We've had at

least five to six inches of ice covering all of our greens. There's no question about turf damage."

### A GUESS AND A GAMBLE

When gambling with Mother Nature, sometimes there's no escaping injury. "It's a matter of which of the two evils do



Winter projects, such as this irrigation project at Oakmont CC, in Pennsylvania, have been frustrated by harsh weather in the Northeast.

you want," Corcoran said. "Do you want ice encasement with oxygen deprivation to the plant, or do you remove it and deal with crown hydration? We decided to leave the ice on until there was a steady thaw. We were in a damned if you do, damned if you don't situation. Ice is a real big pain."

Continued on page 14

## Career moves: superintendents weigh merits of 'three-year rule'

By JOEL JOYNER

FORT WASHINGTON, Pa. — In their quest for more prestigious golf courses, better working conditions and fatter paychecks, many superintendents follow the unofficial but compelling "three-year rule." Under this principle, they jump ship and switch to a fancier course every three years or so — at least until they find the perfect job.

Does the "rule" make sense in today's job market? Do loyalty or lasting relationships count for anything? Does job-hopping your way through a career look good



Sam Hocutt

on a resume? And finally, is money the only motivator?

Money is not the primary key for Sam Hocutt, one of many superintendents we called to get their take on the three-year itch. Earlier in his career, he was a

true believer in frequent moves.

### ENDURING THE LONG HAUL

"The three-year rule is mostly due to boredom," said Hocutt, now superintendent at the Pawleys Plantation Golf Course on Pawleys Island, S.C. "You can get a course in great shape without a hassle in that time. After that, the job seems too routine. It's not the challenge it used to be."

Hocutt is in his eighth year at the island course, after working three-year stints at Oyster Bay in Calabash, N.C., Carolina Pines in Havelock, N.C., and the Hampton Club on St. Simons Island, Ga. "When building a course, the boredom starts at or about the three-year point. I feel during this period superintendents are at peak performance," he said. "Then they want to go build another one just for the challenge."

Family responsibilities can dampen the urge to move, especially if it means uprooting kids from schools and friends, but they don't kill the drive for a better job. "There aren't many superintendents who can endure the long haul," Hocutt maintains. "As the course ages, so does the irrigation, equipment, labor, budget, members, and then yourself. It becomes tougher the longer you stay in one place."

Out of 100 courses on Pawleys Island, Hocutt knows of only four superintendents who've lasted at one place more than 10 years. "Three years is a safe bet," he said. "It's also a good step up to increase your salary."

### FINDING A HOME

Vince Hankley, the 12-year veteran superintendent at the private Country Club of Petersburg, in Virginia, begs to differ. "I don't think three years is enough time to get your feet wet," he said. "Five or six years should be the minimum to build up

Continued on page 15

## Huesgen and Flynn take top jobs at Pebble Beach

PEBBLE BEACH, Calif. — Tom Huesgen has been named head superintendent at the hallowed Pebble Beach Golf Links here on the California coast. He replaces Erik Greytok, who has moved on to Winged Foot Golf Club, in Mamaroneck, N.Y.

At the same time, Chris Flynn has assumed the head superintendent position at Spanish Bay Golf Club, also a Pebble Beach Co. course.

Both moves reflect the company's long tradition of promoting from within.

A graduate of Oregon State, with a degree in turfgrass management, Huesgen transferred in from Spanish Bay, where he had been superintendent since 1998. He is a member of the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America as well as the Northern California Golf Course Superintendents Association.



"Tom is familiar with all of Pebble Beach Company's golf properties and is a talented and experienced superintendent," said Paul Spengler, senior vice president of golf properties. "We're confident in his ability to maintain the integrity and qualities that make Pebble Beach Golf Links one of the most famous courses in the world."

### STARTED AS SPRAY TECHNICIAN

Chris Flynn, most recently assistant superintendent at Spyglass Hill Golf Course, has been with the Pebble Beach Co. since 1998. He was first employed as a spray technician at Spyglass and then promoted to assistant superintendent last August. He holds a degree in turfgrass management from the State University of New York at Cobleskill.

Earlier in his career, Flynn worked at the TPC Course at Las Colinas, in Dallas, Texas; and also at Mahopac Golf Course, Westchester Country Club and Brae Burn Country Club, all in New York.

"Chris has done a great job as assistant superintendent of Spyglass Hill and is ready to take on more responsibilities at Spanish Bay," said RJ Harper, vice president of golf operations for the Pebble Beach organization. "As with Tom Huesgen's promotion, we're delighted to have within our ranks the types of employees who can step right into leadership positions at our world-class golf courses."

## Tools of the Trade...at Todd Raisch's Ridgewood CC

PARAMUS, N.J. — Superintendent Todd Raisch hopes to be at the top of his game when the 2001 Senior PGA Championship arrives here at Ridgewood Country Club this month.

The championship will be played over a composite course using select holes from all three nines: Center, West and East courses. The layout, which can be stretched to 7,150 yards, will play at 6,904 yards for the event.

Todd Raisch

"We'll feature the sixth hole from the Center course, a short but devilish hole of 275 yards with a 1,700-square-foot green," said Raisch. "It was recently ranked by *Golf* magazine as one of the Top 500 holes in the world."

The 1929 A.W. Tillinghast-designed layout has fairways lined with 100-year-old oaks. "This is by far our biggest maintenance challenge," said Raisch. The large oaks deprive the poa annua greens, tees and fairways of vital sunlight, water and nutrients. "Trees are a very emotional issue at our club, and in the past you could have been hung for suggesting that a tree be removed," he said.

Three tees were rebuilt this past fall and will be included in the tournament. "It was not part of the tournament preparation," Raisch said, "but rather an ongoing

project to increase the size of our tees. We're currently in the design phase of a master plan with architect Gil Hanse."

A Memorial Day fire sparked by a cart charger back in 1997 has led to the construction of two new maintenance buildings. "We now have a 6,000-square-foot equipment storage facility and a new 4,200-square-foot employee/administration building complete with bedrooms for student interns," said Raisch.

The superintendent is building toward peak conditions for

**A 1958 RYAN SODCUTTER IS THE OLDEST PIECE OF EQUIPMENT IN RAISCH'S INVENTORY**

the championship. "You would be hard pressed to find a better week on the calendar to have a major championship in northern New Jersey," Raisch said. "The one downside is that we will still be in the window of opportunity for poa annua to seed, albeit near the end. It will be critical for us to nail the timing of our Embark applications."

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**Tee mowers:** 10 John Deere 220A

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Two new John Deere 1600 rough mowers in Raisch's maintenance building

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**Verti-cut reels:** 6 for John Deere 2500 Triplex

**Aerifiers:** 2 John Deere 1500, 3 Ryan Greensaire 24

**Topdressers:** 1 Cushman

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**Flagsticks:** Par Aide 8' yellow

**Computer & accessories:**

Dell Inspiron 50,000 notebook, Palm Vx

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**Primary insecticide:** Merit

**Primary fungicide:** Daconil Ultrex

**Primary slow release fertilizer:** Plant food 20-0-0

**One thing you could not live without:** My wife Susan and daughter Elly

**Oldest piece of equipment:** 1958 Ryan sodcutter

**Total square footage of maintenance building(s):** 19,200 square feet

**Annual rounds of golf:** 35,000

**Normal green speed:** 10'

Tom Prichard named superintendent at new Fazio course

NORTHBROOK, Ill. — Tom Prichard has been named superintendent of The Glen Club, an 18-hole layout in Glenview, Ill., being designed by golf architect Tom Fazio. The course is scheduled to open in July.

Prichard, who has been with KemperSports Management since 1991, has been managing the grow-in of The Glen Club since last August.

"Tom has an outstanding track record with our organization and is accomplished in all areas of turf grass maintenance and management," said Steve Lesnik, KemperSports CEO.

Two years after joining the company, Prichard was named superintendent for two of KemperSports' Chicago-area facilities: Royal Melbourne, the Greg Norman-designed private club in Long Grove, and the nine-hole Vernon Hills Golf Course. In 1998 he assumed additional responsibilities for the company as a regional agronomist providing consulting services to other KemperSports properties in the Midwest and West.

Before coming aboard at KemperSports, Prichard served as superintendent at Lakewood Golf Club and Woodstock Country Club, both in Illinois, and as assistant superintendent at Big Foot Country Club in Fontana, Wisc. He is a Class A member of the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America.

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## Northwest drought

Continued from page 1

NOAA acknowledged that a jet stream pattern, termed the "Omega block," formed a barrier last December that diverted Pacific rain and snow storms from the Northwest to California and Canada.

"They're talking about the drought situation all over the West Coast," said Michael Barber, superintendent here at the Hangman Valley Golf Club. "Usually we'd get rain down here in the lowlands and the mountains would bulk up on snow in the winter, but that never happened this year. I've heard the snow pack is only 50 percent of what it should be in the mountains."

### 'CROSS YOUR FINGERS'

"If worse comes to worst, we could be in big trouble," Barber said. "It's a cross your fingers and hope that you make it through the summer situation because, obviously, there is no quick fix. We irrigate the course with surface water from Hangman Creek, and we don't have an alternative water source available here."

Typically, the Northwest helps California keep the air conditioners running in the summer. This year, however, soaring energy rates and lack of precipitation may leave the entire West Coast high and dry. Mother Nature would need to deliver precipitation in biblical proportions to help the region recover from the drought.

"They're forecasting a wetter-than-normal spring," said Sean Hoolehan, superintendent at

the Wildhorse Resort Golf Club in Pendleton, Ore. "But the drought forecasters claim that it would take at least 200 percent of our normal expected rainfall during the months of March, April, May and June to get us back to normal levels."

### SALMON OR HOT TUBS?

Reservoirs are hitting record-low marks as California's population and energy consumption climbs.

"There's no question that our reservoirs are all extremely low," Hoolehan said. "I drove to Portland recently, and I've seen water levels this spring lower than what I've seen in summers past. I work in the high desert, and we get all of our rain from October to April," he said. "We still get some rain after April, but the amounts diminish substantially."

What will be the rippling effects of this drought as summer activities approach? "I'm not sure to what extent it will effect the energy crunch in California," said Hoolehan, "but we have our own issues surrounding our hydroelectric output regarding fish and the salmon."

Spilling water over dams to generate power is likely to jeopardize stocks of chum salmon and steelhead that migrate to the ocean in the spring and summer. The chum salmon is listed as threatened under the Endangered Species Act.

"We can't afford to wipe out fish stocks just to keep California out of the dark," Hoolehan said. "That's what the governments, the tribes and the

Continued on page 18

## Quarry Hills calls globetrotting Kessener back to his roots

QUINCY, Mass. — After roaming the globe building golf courses most of his life, Massachusetts native Gary Kessener, 42, has returned home to oversee construction of one of the most ambitious golf projects ever undertaken in the United States — Quarry Hills Golf Course.

"It's a fascinating project," said Kessener of the 27-hole John Sanford-designed layout being built over three former landfills, a few miles from downtown Boston. "It's great to be able to do something like this where I grew up."

Quarry Hills developers Chick Geilich and Bill O'Connell reviewed more than 50 resumes and interviewed a half-dozen applicants before selecting Kessener. "We needed someone who had extensive grow-in and building experience," Geilich said. "Gary fit the bill. He's built 30 or more courses and started out running a bulldozer and planting trees by hand. He's been



Gary Kessener, superintendent of the Quarry Hills course, with the Boston skyline just visible in the distance

soccer fields and baseball fields on the site of the former Quincy landfill. The city signed a 50-year lease with the developers to close the landfill and build the recreation facilities.

Geilich and O'Connell then signed a similar agreement with the town of Milton, which needed

This led to a public-private partnership with the Massachusetts Highway Department's Central Artery Group, calling for delivery of more than 12 million tons of excavate (as many as 1,200 truckloads daily) from the "Big Dig," a gigantic highway and tunnel project designed to improve traffic flow through Boston.

Trucks have delivered more than 800,000 loads of excavate to the site, with the material used to sculpt the course, learning center and athletic fields. The tipping fees paid by the state for the Big Dig excavate are helping to pay for the project, expected to open in 2002.

The course is located on high ground just seven miles from downtown Boston. It overlooks

the entire city to the north, Boston Harbor and the islands to the east, and the 30,000-acre Blue Hills Reservation wilderness park to the west and south. Roughly 360 townhouse apartments and a hotel/conference center also are planned.

### GLOBAL EXPERIENCE

Golf construction has been part of Kessener's life since his early teens. He spent summers in California, where he helped build greens on a course near his summer home. He graduated from high school in 1978 and went to work for his brother-in-law, who had a landscape business in California.

Kessener also worked on several courses, including Carmel Mountain Ranch in Temecula and Desert Falls Country Club in Palm Springs. He helped install Toro's first VT-1 irrigation system at Bixby Village in Long Beach.

He later worked as project supervisor for golf architects David Rainville, Ronald Fream and Greg Norman, doing the early leg work

and overseeing construction projects in Japan, Taiwan, Korea, Thailand, Malaysia, Indonesia, Argentina, France, Portugal and Tunisia. He even started his own firm, Golf Planning Management Construction Services,

located in Kota Kinabalu, Malaysia.

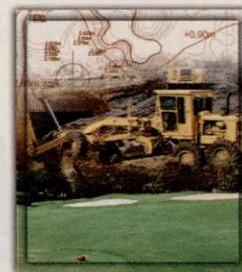
### LANDING THE JOB

Kessener kept in touch with his roots, flying back to Cape Cod yearly to visit relatives. Two years ago he noticed a sign announcing the Quarry Hills project. He later saw an ad seeking a superintendent for the project, contacted Geilich and was hired in November 1999.

Kessener believes the developers hired him based on his extensive construction experience. "Many of the Asian projects I was involved with were on an even larger scale than this one," he said. "It didn't overwhelm me. My ability to see light at the end of the tunnel helped me land this job."

### WAITING FOR SNOW TO MELT

Kessener estimated 95 percent of the 12 million tons of fill material from the Big Dig was on site as of late December. At that time, 1.5 million cubic yards of material were stockpiled under the snow waiting to be spread.



Snow has occasionally slowed progress. When that happens, workers have redirected their efforts to filling in one of several quarries. Between 300 and 500 trucks continue to bring fill daily.

Continued on page 16

### SUPERINTENDENT IN THE SPOTLIGHT

all over the world but grew up in New England, so he also understood the peculiarities of our weather and conditions."

### GENESIS OF QUARRY PROJECT

Geilich and O'Connell first approached Quincy Mayor James Sheets in 1991 with the idea of building a golf course,

to close its landfill, which bordered the Quincy property.

Abandoned quarries, wetlands and historical sites also had to be dealt with. The developers accumulated a 540-acre parcel that included three landfills and some private property.

### 12 MILLION TONS OF FILL

## 'Manufactured' topsoil solving many problems at Quarry Hills GC

QUINCY, Mass. — With native topsoil both expensive and scarce, Quarry Hills is manufacturing its own topsoil to cover much of the 27-hole John Sanford-designed course under construction in suburban Boston.

Manufacturing its own topsoil? That's right.

Working with Falmouth, Maine-based New England Organics, Quarry Hills is mixing sand, organic pellets and short paper fibers (SPFs) — recovered paper fibers generated by paper mills — to produce a high-quality loam that is erosion-resistant, weed-free, water-retentive and about 40 percent less expensive than native topsoil, according to superintendent Gary Kessener.

Quarry Hills is covering three landfills with more than 800,000 truck loads of excavate from the tunnel under construction in Boston known as the "Big Dig." The configuration of the landfills, coupled with the large amount of fill, has created steep slopes on the site.

"The idea was to find a way to stabilize all these slopes and retain moisture to promote plant growth," Sanford said. "This has proven to be very useful and cost effective, and it provides a way to use recycled product."

### TRADEMARKED AS BIOMIX

During the manufacture of paper, wood is



Manufactured soil, using paper fibers, helps reduce erosion. Eroded ground in foreground is normal topsoil.

chipped and processed, with the longer fibers extracted to make paper. Fibers too short to use become a waste product. At Quarry Hills, one part short paper fibers are being mixed with one part sand and a quarter part organic slow-release fertilizer pellets produced at a nearby sewage treatment plant. The result is an organically enriched material New England Organics has trademarked as BioMix.

The short paper fibers provide valuable organic matter that improves soil structure, retains

Continued on page 17

## Selecting a bentgrass cultivar for greens takes research

By KEVIN ROSS

When Penncross bentgrass first became available in 1956, little did anyone know the standard this grass would set for more than 40 years. Penncross is still the best-selling bentgrass in the world — more than a million pounds are sold annually worldwide — but slowly things are changing.

Today's bentgrass market has more than 30 to choose from. With this many cultivars the question arises: which one should you choose?

A good starting point is the National Turfgrass Evaluation Program, or NTEP. Throughout the United States, turf trials are set up at various universities. These bents are evaluated and results are compiled and published.

What does this data tell you? Should you just select what's rated number one? No, this data is merely a starting point. Maintenance practices are different at each NTEP site, so it is important to know a few of the vital inputs, such as mowing heights, topdressing frequency, cultural practices, fertilization amounts and watering.

### RESEARCH ON THE INTERNET

At the NTEP Web site ([www.ntep.org](http://www.ntep.org)), you can dig into data that will help you to see if a bent is suited for your region. The best way to look at bents that may perform for your conditions is to compare test sites that match your situation. This gives a better idea of its performance related to your conditions.

Also, on the Web site, you can compare how bents will

Continued on page 17

## Winter's mess

Continued from page 11

Corcoran, new to the club, has had a rough initiation. "Last year, members were playing golf the first week of March here. We'll be hard pressed to open at the end of April," he said. "It's been a hell of a starting year. Mother Nature has given me a pretty nasty welcome."

Old Man Winter also has taken

his toll on maintenance budgets. "Most of my guys are putting in 20 hours of overtime each week to get the course back on track," Corcoran said. "Add on equipment rentals to clear snow and ice, and you have a big impact on the budget."

### AN EXHAUSTING RECOVERY

Construction projects also have suffered from the harsh season.

"It's horrible," said Paul B.

Latshaw, superintendent at the Oak Hill Country Club in Rochester, N.Y. "We're in the middle of a \$3.1-million dollar restoration project that includes the installation of a new irrigation system. If you're trying to do construction, this past winter has just been absolutely brutal. We were well above 100 inches of snow here when we usually average about 93 inches. Then, in the middle of winter, we had

thaws that would only freeze up again and again."

The construction project is in preparation for the 2003 PGA Championship tournament to be held at the Oak Hill facility. "We started construction this past September, when Landscapes Unlimited pulled in," said Latshaw. "Unfortunately, we went into spring this year with at least eight inches of snow cover."

Winterkill worries are less

pressing for the superintendent than snow mold this season. "Early spring, we only saw grass on the greens for half a day at tops," he said. "Then we'd be hit with six more inches of snow. My big concern is snow mold. We had protection down, but we weren't able to re-apply a mid-to-late winter application to get us over the hump. I know we have a lot of pink and gray snow mold in our roughs."

It will take a long and exhausting recovery effort to get the ball rolling again at Oak Hill. "Being snow covered for so long, we're going to have a lot of damage to the turf," Latshaw said. "Combined with the construction project, it's going to be like you can't imagine."

Superintendent John Zimmer, Jr., at the Oakmont Country Club in Oakmont, Pa., has also battled wicked weather undertaking the installation of a new irrigation system on the course. The course started the project on Oct. 20 last year and he hopes to be completed by the first of June. "It's been a terrible winter that has not cooperated at all," Zimmer said. "We had to run snow blowers most of the winter just to keep working."

### SOLUTION TO THE PROBLEM

Latshaw's father, Paul R. Latshaw, the superintendent at the Winged Foot Golf Club in Mamaroneck, N.Y., also knows the discouraging results of this past Northeast season. "The snow's off the ground," he said, "but it's like a mud hole here. Compared to last year, we're way behind to the start of the season. We've had a very severe winter."

The elder Latshaw, however, believes he has stumbled upon the solution to this havoc-wreaking weather. "This is only my second season here, and I've had enough of the winter in the Northeast. I'm retiring this year," he said, "and as I told my wife at the retirement party, 'I'm going to do some consulting work and stick south of the Mason-Dixon Line.'" ■

### DEERE SPONSORS GCSAA IMAGE CAMPAIGN

LAWRENCE, Kan. — John Deere Golf & Turf Products will sponsor the GCSAA's image campaign for 2001, featuring superintendents showcasing their balancing of "science and art." The GCSAA is running a 30-second commercial on the Golf Channel through September. The spot shows a maintenance crew performing routine turf practices around a golf course while singing "Oh, What a Beautiful Morning" from the musical "Oklahoma." The ad will also be shown during The Masters, The U.S. Open Championship, the John Deere Classic and the Ryder Cup.

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## Three-year rule

Continued from page 11

confidence with the people you work with.

"Long term, you'll have more loyalty from your employer," Hankley added. "There are always times when things don't go as you've planned, and you need a little loyalty from an employer who has the ability to hang in there with you.

"There's something to be said for moving up a little bit to a bigger operating course or paycheck when the opportunity presents itself, but I think everybody should be settling in and trying to find a home," he added. "In my opinion, that should be a career goal - to find a home."

### BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS

If there's a middle ground in this debate, Douglass Larson, thinks he's found it.

"I like to think of it as the three-to-five-year rule," said Larson, superintendent at the Manufacturers' Golf and Country Club here in Pennsylvania.

In a previous incarnation, he logged five years at the Riverton Country Club in New Jersey. "The advantages to moving," he said, "are the possibly major increases in salary, the new experiences to broaden your knowledge, and the ability to get your name and reputation around."

But Larson also points out the drawbacks of rootlessly roaming through a career. "You never seem to develop a relationship with a club and its membership because they're always waiting for you to fly the coop," he said. "You don't get the stability of family life. And it may also show little job stability to future employers. Then you have the uncertainty of a new club. You have to figure out the philosophy, membership and politics. In your current position, you know all that."

### VANISHING JOB SECURITY

Relationships between employers and employees also play a critical role in job turnover. "There is quite a bit of movement in our industry, and I think a significant amount of that movement is precipitated by employers in the way they treat the superintendent and compensate them with pay and benefits," said Tommy Witt, the new president of the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America.

Employers may value superintendents, he said, but rarely do they adequately pay them. "Superintendents are looking for that job out there that will compensate them fairly, where they will be viewed as a valuable and

contributing member of the team, and where they'll have a solid relationship with their employer," said Witt, now in his first year as superintendent of the Kiawah Island Golf Club on John's Island, S.C.

In an unstable job market, there's usually a driving force or natural instinct to remain mobile. "I don't think there is such an animal as guaranteed job se-

curity anymore - not in the golf business, not in the magazine business and certainly not in corporate America these days," said Witt.

"Superintendents often have to change jobs to get to the type of

course they want to be at - movement is part of the equation," he said. "You're meeting new people, so you're increasing your visibility and networking ability."

### SEEKING A BETTER SITUATION

Before arriving at the Kiawah Island course, Witt started his career by climbing that superintendent ladder: five years at the Bent Tree Country Club in Dallas, Texas; followed by four years

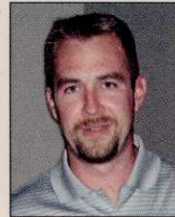
at the Wynstone Golf Club in North Barrington, Ill.; and then three years at the StillWaters Resort in Dadeville, Ala.

"People aren't moving just to be moving," Witt said. "They're trying to find a better situation for themselves.

"The bottom line," he added, "is that superintendents are looking for greater compensation and improved relationships." ■



Tommy Witt



Doug Larson

logged five years at the Riverton Country Club in New Jersey. "The advantages to moving," he said, "are the possibly major increases in salary, the new experiences to broaden your knowledge, and the ability to get your name and reputation around."

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## Kessener

Continued from page 13

McCourt Construction Co. is placing the fill. Course construction is underway, but will begin in earnest this summer with Country Golf Inc. of Michigan, the course builder. Plans call for grassing to begin this fall. If all goes as planned, Quarry Hills will have at least nine holes open

for play in 2002.

### JUGGLING MANY BALLS

Kessener's extensive experience and his temperament are the main strengths he brings to the job, according to Geilich. "He fits in well and is liked and respected by the community," the developer said. "There is nothing he hasn't seen before."

Another helpful quality is Kessener's ability to deal with a

diverse group of engineers, architects, contractors and government officials to bring such a complicated project to fruition. "I work with them to adapt their designs - bridges, overflow structures and so on," he said. "Bringing them all together is the challenge."

Kessener faces hurdles and challenges every day. "It gets frustrating for Gary and every-

one else," Geilich said. "So many things are out of our control. We don't know when the fill is coming from the Big Dig. We don't know if the material will be usable until we test it. If it isn't usable, we have to move it off site. If we can use it, but don't need it at that particular moment, then we have to store it somewhere."

"And this is all before we can even start building the golf

course," Geilich added. "Then you have the dirt contractor getting in the way of the golf course contractor. There are constant disagreements about whose responsibility it is to move certain materials. Gary has been in the middle of all that and maintained the peace."

Working with unionized labor also has been trying, especially for a man used to hopping on a bulldozer, picking up a shovel or unloading a truck himself. Union rules forbid Kessener from doing anything except suggesting how others might do something. "That's frustrating," he said. "Very frustrating."

### TROUBLESHOOTER

Kessener called Sanford's design a very creative layout. "John and I work together on a regular basis to fine-tune things," he said. "I rely on him as much for his design knowledge as he relies on me to be his eyes here on a daily basis. I'm a troubleshooter."

Despite all he's seen and experienced, the complexity of Quarry Hills still occasionally surprises Kessener.

"Things don't happen overnight, especially when you are dealing with regulatory agencies," he said. "We have to deal with officials and consultants from the towns of Quincy and Milton, the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and the federal government, as well as our own consultants and engineers."

"Then there are agencies that don't normally become involved in course construction, like the Massachusetts Highway Authority and various historical conservation committees. It's definitely double or even triple duty."

### YOU CAN GO HOME AGAIN

Kessener saw Quarry Hills as an opportunity for his family, which includes his Thai wife and seven-year-old son, to return home and settle down. His willingness to stay on at Quarry Hills once play begins was another factor in his hiring.

"It's important that the person who is there while the irrigation and drainage are installed stays with the project once it opens," Geilich said. "If that person has to run it, he'll make sure they are installed correctly and won't take any shortcuts."

"That goes for the whole course," he said. "The person who builds it will make sure it's done right if he also has to maintain it."

Kessener speaks bits and pieces of five different languages - Thai, French, Spanish, Malay and Japanese.

"I can speak enough to get by," he said. "If you're in somebody else's house, you have to do things their way."

Now, Kessener is back in his own house. ■

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## Topsoil

Continued from page 13

moisture and increases nutrient-holding capacity. Additionally, because it is a mixture of sand and tree fibers, the manufactured soil is weed-free, unlike traditional loam.

But one of the biggest advantages, particularly on a steep site like Quarry Hills, is the ability of the paper fibers to stand up to heavy rains that would normally wash away large amounts of topsoil and seed. The manufactured soil even outperforms erosion-control blankets often placed over newly seeded areas, Kessener said. A half-acre test slope planted at Quarry Hills has remained lush and weed-free, while a neighboring slope covered with regular topsoil has been eroded and dominated by weeds.

"This material could save builders a lot of money," the Quarry Hills superintendent said. "The top six inches become almost sponge-like, absorbing and holding water. If you put it in unirrigated areas that's a big benefit."

### SEED GERMINATION QUALITIES

In addition to its application on Quarry Hills' dramatic side slopes, BioMix will be used in the fairways. Kessener is spreading roughly 1.5 inches of the manufactured soil over the 10 inches of existing fairway soil and then rototilling it down to a depth of six inches. The only place BioMix won't be used is on greens and tees.

The manufactured soil costs \$5 to \$6 per yard, about 40 percent less than the \$10 to \$15 per yard for traditional loam. And it is mixed on site.

"It's quite incredible," said Quarry Hills developer Chick Geilich. "We've done a lot of experimenting with this material and have come up with a mixture that works quite well."

Grass seed germinates more slowly in the BioMix soil than in traditional soil, lagging behind by three to seven days, according to New England Organics business development specialist Pat Ellis. But it catches up within several weeks. And the erosion resistance of BioMix means far more grass seeds eventually germinate than with traditional loam, he added.

### PROXIMITY TO SOURCE CRITICAL

Transportation is the major cost. "Trucking anything a long distance can kill you financially," Sanford said. "To be cost effective you have to be within a reasonable distance of a paper mill."

Paper companies are abundant throughout most of New England, New York, Michigan, Wisconsin, Alabama and the Pacific

Northwest, making manufactured soil a potential product for those areas.

At Quarry Hills, Kessener is using 80,000 cubic yards of BioMix on the side slopes and 22,500 yards on the fairways.

Ellis estimates New England Organics could provide 200,000 to 400,000 yards of material annually. ■

## Bentgrass

Continued from page 13

perform in your area. For example, if your biggest disease problem is dollar spot, then the ratings for dollar spot injury may be one of your top concerns. Should it be your only concern? Definitely not. Selecting bents based on one or two categories

is a mistake. Look at all the categories, but give less weight to something that doesn't bear directly on you.

For example, when I selected Penn A-4 in 1996 to use in resurfacing the greens at Country Club of the Rockies, some performance characteristics were largely irrelevant. Having very little disease pressure, I wasn't

concerned about disease resistance. I was more interested in its drought performance, due to our extremely arid summer conditions; and winter survival, due to our intense winter season.

### COOL AND WARM SEASON TESTS

Other information now available is the research being conducted jointly by the USGA,

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## N'west drought

continued from page 12

power utilities are attempting to work out now, to make sure that all needs are balanced and maintained as much as possible."

"It's not fair to us in the Northwest, when somebody wanting to turn on a hot tub in California does it without fear of paying increased costs," said Rep. Jennifer Dunn, R-Wash.

### 'DOMINO EFFECT'

As golf course superintendents in the Northwest fire up their irrigation systems full steam for the peak summer season, California superintendents are awaiting to see how their own operations will fare this season. The Bush administration has rejected the idea of placing price controls on wholesale electricity sold to western states.

"As far as Bush saying that

California can take care of their own problems, well, we can," said Ken Schwark, superintendent at the Roddy Ranch Golf Club in Antioch, Calif. "We have the money. But the thing is, people need to realize that if California goes under because of this energy crisis, so goes the rest of the nation." California is a vital part of this nation, he said, with its agriculture, business, technology, and even Hollywood. ■

## Bentgrass

Continued from page 17

GCSAA and NTEP. This research endeavor has set up test greens at 16 locations throughout the United States. There are eight test greens set up in cool-season locations that focus on bentgrass only. There are also eight other test green locations, which are set-up in warm-season/transition zone areas. Of

these eight, five areas include bentgrass test plots.

A total of 18 bentgrasses are included on each of these test putting greens. The greens are in use as practice putting greens, so they get some traffic. These greens are not used as part of play, so factors such as ballmarks are not evaluated. One of the main goals of this research is to compile regional data that will help in the selection process.

### TEST GREENS

What else can be done to select the proper bentgrass for your site? If you have time, set up your own test green. The best example I've seen was at the Vintage Club in Palm Springs, Calif.

In 1996, while I was in the process of bentgrass selection, I visited Doug Anderson, superintendent at the Vintage, to discuss his selection of Penn A-4. Doug had set up a test practice green and watched the performance of eight different bentgrasses over a one-year period, before making his final selection.

The advantages of building a test green are numerous. First, you get to watch it under your exact conditions. You also get to dictate the maintenance regimen. Things such as cutting height, watering practices, traffic, fertilization and topdressing can all be tailored to the desired level of turf quality. Also, you can evaluate the putting quality.

### OVER-WINTERING IN COLORADO

In my selection of Penn A-4, I was concerned with its ability to survive the tough winters in Vail, Colo. I ran my own winter survival test on two test plots, each 10 feet by 10 feet.

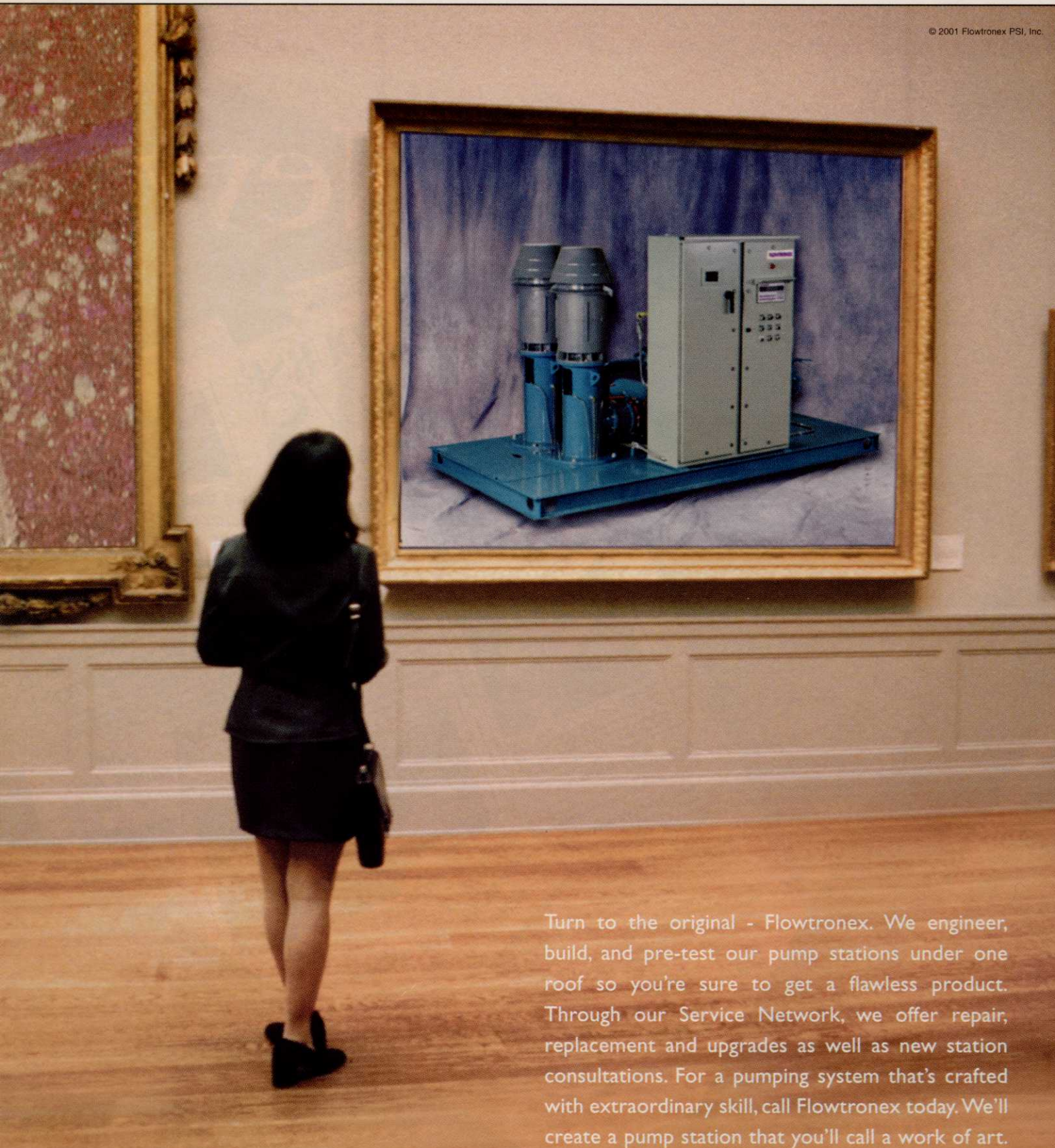
In the first test plot we shoveled all snow off throughout the winter as a desiccation test. On the second plot we poured on water and built an ice layer about 10 inches thick to test for ice-related injury.

The following spring we were able to evaluate how Penn A-4 would over-winter in our climate. With no turf setback that spring, this was the final piece to the puzzle in selecting this grass for our course.

With the greater popularity of these new bentgrasses, we now have many real-life experiences to examine. When I selected Penn A-4, there were only a half-dozen golf courses using it at the time.

The combination of the NTEP data, research greens, superintendents' experiences and some testing on your own can insure you of a proper bentgrass selection for your situation.

*Kevin J. Ross is director of golf course management at the Country Club of the Rockies and a regular contributor to Golf Course News.*



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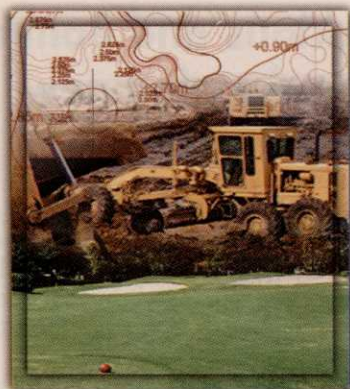
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## BRIEFS

### RAINMAKER TO DEVELOP STONY POINT

COLUMBIA, Md. — Rainmaker Golf Development, based here, has reached agreement to develop the Stony Point Golf Club for the town of Stony Point, N.Y. The 18-hole layout will be designed by Jacobson Golf Course Design. Rainmaker's selection came after the municipality's national search for a project manager to shepherd the development. The town has established a budget of about \$15 million and hopes to break ground on the course this month, with an opening date in June 2003. No builder has yet been named. Stony Point is located along the shores of the Hudson River in southern New York. The course will incorporate many granite ridges and bluffs, offering some 150-foot elevation changes from tee to fairway.

## Retooled Bay area layout reopens as Monarch Bay

By JAY FINEGAN

SAN LEANDRO, Calif. — An \$8.1-million renovation has transformed the San Leandro Golf Complex into a sparkling 27-hole layout now called Monarch Bay Golf Club.

Set on San Francisco Bay, the remodeled facility gives Bay area residents a retooled championship layout and a spiffed up nine-hole executive track called Marina Golf Course.

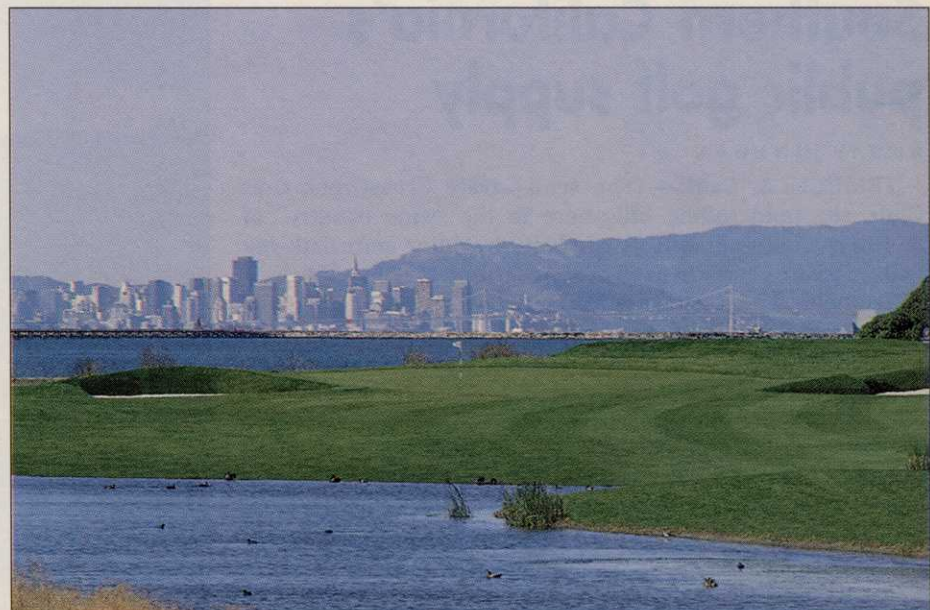
Architect John Harbottle completely redesigned both courses in this project undertaken jointly by the City of San Leandro and American Golf Corp. It's believed to be one of the largest privately funded renovations ever on a municipal golf facility. "American Golf brought the money to do the development and the city guaranteed the lease," Harbottle said.

Measuring over 7,000 yards, the 18-hole daily-fee track — the Tony Lema Course — holds the distinction of being the second longest and most difficult par-71 layout in the state. However, multiple tees give players a range of options.

Named after local hero and British Open champion Tony Lema, the links-style layout meanders over gentle terrain. Sixteen of 18 holes enjoy views of San Francisco Bay, with some parts of the course bordered by natural wetlands.

### FIRM, FAST FAIRWAYS

The executive nine-holer was closed for a year for its renovation, followed by



The Monarch Bay Golf Club looks out on San Francisco and the Golden Gate Bridge.

Photo by D2 Productions, Murphy/Scully

the year-long shutdown of the Lema layout, which reopened in March.

"We renovated both of them top to bottom," Harbottle said. "There wasn't a blade of grass left unturned. The Tony Lema Course is totally different now. A lot of the layout remains the same, because the holes fit the terrain very well. But green locations have shifted, and the bunkering is completely changed."

Steep, sod-faced bunkers placed throughout the course create a complex

design, where careful strategy is rewarded with shortcuts and open approaches to the greens. The firm, fast fairways and prevailing winds make for a true links feel. The challenging layout is already scheduled to host the USGA Mid-Amateur Championship qualifying round in August.

### LANDFILL LOCATION

The \$8.1-million budget wasn't as large as it sounds, according to Harbottle.

Continued on page 25



Photo courtesy of the ehls collection

(Left to right) Mickie Gallagher, Dave Ogilvie, Bobby Jones, and Alfred S. Bourne at Augusta Country Club, where Jones kicked off his 1930 Grand Slam.

## Silva restoring Ross' Augusta CC

By PHILIP HALL

AUGUSTA, Ga. — Architect Brian Silva will break ground this July on a thorough restoration of Augusta Country Club, a Donald Ross design with a rich golf history that actually predates Ross and stretches back to the 19th century.

Augusta Country Club will close for the summer and fall and reopen for play next January, according to general manager Henry Marburger. When the restoration is complete, Augusta CC will feature a layout as true to its Ross plans as any course in the Southeast.

Silva first visited the club two years

ago. "At that time, the discussions centered mostly around restoring the bunkers," recalled the architect, whose extensive Ross restoration portfolio includes Seminole Golf Club in North Palm Beach, Fla., Biltmore Forest Country Club in Asheville, N.C., Old Elm Golf Club in Chicago, and Charlotte (N.C.) Country Club, host to last year's USGA Senior Amateur.

"After that initial visit, the club got hold of Ross' original, working drawings from the Tufts Archive in Pinehurst," Silva continued. "And I mean drawings straight from the source: Ross' hand-written notes are

Continued on page 26

## Barbaron, Southeastern co-building the North Course at Bonita Bay's Mediterra

NAPLES, Fla. — Last December, on the same day the Bonita Bay Group opened the South Course at Mediterra, the company broke ground for its second layout, the North Course, two years ahead of schedule.

Now, in an innovative move to ensure the opening of the North Course this December, the company has hired two

"This is the first time we have worked side by side with another contractor on the same course," said Danny Moman of Barbaron, "and it's working out extremely well."

According to Mickey McSwain, this is also the first time that Southeastern Golf has worked on a course in conjunction with another contractor.



Construction is under way at the North Course at Mediterra.

separate golf course contractors to build the Tom Fazio-designed layout.

Barbaron Inc., out of Inverness, Fla., and Southeastern Golf, based in Tifton, Ga., have been brought in to pioneer this tandem approach.

### MOVING AHEAD OF SCHEDULE

"The two-contractor approach is definitely outside of the norm, but it's something that our team felt would make the construction process much more efficient,"

Continued on page 23

## CrossCreek adds to Southern California's public golf supply

By JAY FINEGAN

TEMECULA, Calif. — The semi-private CrossCreek Golf Club, set amid rolling hills here in the "wine country" of Southern California, will open in May, providing more daily-fee golf for an area badly in need of it. According to club officials, it will combine the access of a public course with the refinements of a private golf club.

The 6,833-yard layout, designed by Arthur Hills/Steve Forrest and Associates, occupies 180 acres of picturesque countryside. "CrossCreek is an absolutely beautiful site with every component needed for a great golf course," said Hills, who has more than 150 courses to his credit. "There is plenty of variety and challenge for golfers of every ability, and the aesthetics will provide enjoyment for all. Changes in topography and beautiful views will create great drama and an overall memorable golfing experience."

This is the first golf course for developer Imprimus, based in Palm Desert, Calif. "It's a pretty small outfit, just a couple of guys," said senior design associate Chris Wilczynski, the on-site project manager for the Hills team. "We're doing a second course for them in Gypsum, Colorado." Ranger Golf handled the construction out of its western division office, in Chandler, Ariz.

### HILLS ON ALL SIDES

Temecula is a small but growing town northeast of San Diego and due east of San Juan Capistrano, not far from the Camp Pendleton Marine base. "Temecula is becoming a big place for people to move to from San Diego and Los Angeles," Wilczynski said. "There are hills and mountains and kind of a rural flavor."

According to Wilczynski, CrossCreek is a high-end course that will compete well in the area. "The whole property sits down in this big basin they call Walker Basin," he said. "There are high hills on all sides, so it's completely enclosed. But you do get some decent views of tall mountains to the west."

The first five holes play along a corridor of stately oaks and sycamores, with a creek that criss-crosses the fairways at various angles, demanding well-place drives. Holes six through nine come out into the open, across a rolling meadow, and the back nine plays up into the hills and returns through the woody section. Each hole features at least four tee boxes.

### DANGER LURKS ON 13

"There are big hills on the back nine, with a lot of drama



The fifth hole at Cross Creek GC in the wine country northeast of San Diego

there," Wilczynski said. "On the 13th, a cape hole, the fairway sits on this high shelf and a big ravine runs the length of it, at an angle. It sets up a risk/reward situation for your tee shot. You want to carry as much of the ravine as possible. But the thing is 50 feet deep, so if you knock it in there, you'll be dropping or hitting another ball."

The course tests players early. The second hole, for example, a 420-yard par-4, plays straight over the creek to an elevated green that drops off sharply on the left. "The green is completely convex, so anything on the sides will roll off," said Wilczynski. "It's quite tricky."

### STAFF WEARING KNICKERS

Aiming to capture the ambience of golf's "golden age," all CrossCreek employees will sport traditional uniforms, including knickers, white shirts and bow ties. On-course "player assistants" will advise golfers through their round.

Green fees are expected to be in the \$80 to \$100 range, according to Jim Decker of the Hills design group, but membership entitles players to unlimited play as well as exclusive rights and privileges.

Golf and club facilities are being managed by Links Management, based in Farmington, Utah.

## Nicklaus and Bonita Bay planning new Florida course

BONITA SPRINGS, Fla. — Jack Nicklaus has teamed up with the Bonita Bay Group to build the Retreat, a Nicklaus signature golf course set to be constructed under Audubon Cooperative Signature Sanctuary guidelines.

A private club, the Retreat will be situated on a secluded, 275-acre site here in southwest Florida. It's being created as a free-standing facility, with no residential development and membership limited to 275. The site offers outstanding natural assets, including mature oak, pine and cypress trees, and a natural flow way through the center of the property.

Ground will be broken once 100 membership reservations have been received. It is anticipated that the course and its support services will open in fall 2002, with the clubhouse to open in fall 2003.

### PRECISION OVER RAW POWER

Nicklaus said the 18-hole course will reward accuracy, not brute strength.

"There are several constants to my approach," he said. "I design layouts that challenge golfers to play intelligently rather than ones that test their strength—golf is a game of precision more than power. And I avoid disrupting the natural setting as much as possible. The golf holes should fit the terrain."

The clubhouse design is by Richard Diedrich of Diedrich NBA in Atlanta, a leading firm in the field. Diedrich NBA also designed The Club at Mediterra's clubhouse and the Bonita Bay Club Estate clubhouse. "We are designing the clubhouse to complement the site's outstanding natural assets. It will have the character of an estate-house retreat with a Florida ranch theme," said Diedrich.

## Graves & Pascuzzo opens five courses in Calif., heads overseas

EL DORADO HILLS, Calif. — The golf course design firm of Graves & Pascuzzo Ltd. has been on a hot streak recently. It opened five courses in California, moved on the East Coast, ventured into Japan and made its first design sojourn into Europe with a project in Italy.

"It's been hectic," said managing partner Damian Pascuzzo. "We strive on every project to give the attention to detail that is needed in designing a golf course that is memorable, challenging, and fun to play. That attention to detail takes time. Our philosophy is to take on fewer projects and do them well."

One example is Maderas Golf Club, which sits in the picturesque foothills of San Diego. It opened last fall to rave reviews from golfers and golf writers alike.

"The course was designed to reflect the parkland style," said Pascuzzo. Tees were strategically placed on cliffs and rock outcroppings, creating dramatic drives to fairways framed by stands of oaks and sycamores. With elevation changes running about 200 feet, the course offers superb vistas, challenging options and plenty of thrilling shots. According to *The Southern California Golfer's Guide*, "Maderas promises to deliver golf



The Graves & Pascuzzo-renovated La Quinta Country Club in California

memories of a lifetime."

### SCOTTISH FLAVOR

The Bridges, another Graves & Pascuzzo design, opened late last year and created quite a buzz among golf enthusiasts. Inspired by a trip to Scotland's Royal Dornoch, Pascuzzo was committed to bringing a unique style of golf to Northern California.

Located 30 miles east of San Francisco in the foothills of San Ramon, The Bridges is part of a master-planned community developed by Shapell Industries. This par-73 layout sweeps through an expansive valley and can play to over 7,200 yards.

While The Bridges does not claim to be a true links course, it can definitely feel

Continued on page 22

GOLF COURSE NEWS

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## Rees Jones returns to South Carolina's 'low country'

By JAY FINEGAN

JOHN'S ISLAND, S.C. — Construction action is underway at the private Golf Club at Briar's Creek, a new Rees Jones design near Charleston. Set at the edge of one of South Carolina's most scenic rivers, amid a 900-acre retreat of maritime forests and unspoiled marshland, the course will enjoy a superb natural environment.

John's Island lies next to Kiawah Island, home to six golf courses.

Each of the Briar's Creek nines will cross the marsh, which serves as both a hazard and an avenue to fine views of the Kiawah River. The inland holes skirt freshwater wetlands and wind through huge stands of live oaks. Much of the property served as a cotton plantation at one time.

The project is the first golf course for developers Steve Koenig and Ed Myrick, who originally owned the land. The complex will include some 60 houses, mostly sited on large lots along a new lake. The lake, requiring the excavation of a million cubic yards of dirt, is set apart from the fairways to enhance a "pure" golfing experience. "You'll be hard-pressed to see 10 homes while you're playing," Koenig said.

A 12,000-square-foot clubhouse, intended to be "comfortable and casual," will feature a dining room, a billiards room, a complete pro shop and exercise facilities, along with locker rooms and a lounge.

### OPEN BY THANKSGIVING

The 300-acre layout is scheduled to be ready for play by Thanksgiving. Wadsworth Golf's Southeast division is building the course, expected to play at about 7,100 yards.

The layout is currently being shaped and will be both sodded and sprigged once irrigation and drainage work is completed. Superintendent Kyle Bibler is fully on board and assisting in the construction.

The club is being billed as one of the most exclusive private golf clubs in the region. The 20 "founding members" ponied up \$700,000 each in exchange for a three-percent stake in the development.

Founding members include Jeffrey Immelt, the chairman-designate at General Electric, and Robert McNair, owner of the Houston Texans, a new NFL franchise.

### MEMBERSHIP BY INVITATION ONLY

Membership is by invitation only. "We just sent out the first 40 invitations," said Sara Koenig, membership

coordinator. "We have our founders completely in place, and now we're working on our regular memberships. People are nominated by current members, so the invitations come from founders."

Regular memberships require \$675 in monthly dues, and \$75 more for a family membership. The total membership will



Groundbreaking at Briar's Creek: (left to right) Steve Weisser, Steve Koenig, Rees Jones and Ed Myrick

be capped at 300.

The property is rich in "low country" wildlife, everything from deer and raccoons to alligators and a variety of coastal birdlife, ranging from ospreys and egrets to herons.

The club will include a driving range; chipping, pitching and putting areas; and a state-of-the-art teaching facility.

## Hills design unfolding in the Rockies' Roaring Fork Valley

GLENWOOD SPRINGS, Colo. — Site clearing recently commenced at Rose Ranch Golf Club, an Arthur Hills/Steve Forrest and Associates design located in the Roaring Fork Valley, about 45 minutes west of Aspen.

The 7,200-yard, par-72 layout, scheduled to open in the late summer of 2002, will take maximum advantage of the Rocky Mountain scenery, according to golf architect Chris Wilczynski, the project manager.

The highlight of the layout will be the finish. "The last four holes are located on a plateau on top of a mountain, about 300 feet above the other holes on the course," said Wilczynski. "These holes will be very dramatic to play and will help make Rose Ranch the best course in the Roaring Fork Valley."

A strategic course that will place a premium on accuracy and shotmaking, the layout has a number of holes on the valley floor. Numbers three and four run alongside the Roaring Fork River, which for fishing enthusiasts is a gold class

trout stream.

Mount Sopris, standing 14,000 feet, provides a stunning backdrop to holes 10 and 11.

### WADSWORTH BUILDING PROJECT

Wadsworth Golf Construction will handle the construction, under their southwest office in Buckeye, Ariz.



Rose Ranch will play through this rugged Rocky Mountain landscape.

Troon Golf, of Scottsdale, Ariz., has been retained to provide project management during the construction and will stay on as the management company and course operator once Rose Ranch opens for play.

The course owner is L.B. Rose Ranch LLC, a division of Lehman Brothers, a New York-based investment banking firm. The developer is Gate Capital Properties, of San Francisco.

Troon is currently interviewing candidates for the position of superintendent.



### RULEWICH'S GRAND DUNES

MYRTLE BEACH, S.C. — The Grand Dunes Golf Course in Myrtle Beach, S.C. is on schedule to open for play this spring. The Roger Rulewich-designed course is the centerpiece of Grande Dunes Golf Village, a 2,200-acre real

estate development that stretches from the Atlantic Ocean to the intracoastal waterway. The course measures 7,618 yards from the championship tees and offers five other sets of tees for golfers of all skill levels.

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## Mysterious donor keeps Smoke Rise G&CC private

STONE MOUNTAIN, Ga. — Smoke Rise Golf & Country Club here has completed its conversion to equity-club status, thanks in part to a \$1-million gift from an "angel" member.

The club, managed by Billy Casper Golf Management (BCGM) of Vienna, Va., had to come up with an additional \$2 million from members to secure the gift, which was intended to keep the club exclusively private.

Dean Robertson, general manager of

Smoke Rise, spearheaded the membership's matching \$2-million contribution. He had 90 days to raise the money before the gift offer was revoked.

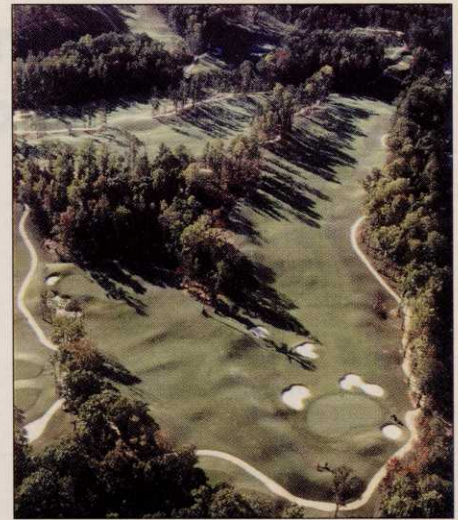
Named BCGM's general manager of the year for his efforts, Robertson oversaw \$1.4 million in equity conversions and \$600,000 in member assessments to meet the mandate.

### ANGEL REMAINS ANONYMOUS

To further enhance the financial stability of the club, Smoke Rise Properties

Inc., the guarantor group, added \$500,000 to the effort by converting \$500,000 in debt to equity memberships at the club.

"The management team at Billy Casper Golf demonstrated the operational means and expertise necessary to ensure that Smoke Rise thrives financially going forward," said the "angel" member, who declined to be identified. "The company's proficiency and proven track record managing properties successfully persuaded me that the money would help make Smoke



Smoke Rise Golf & Country Club

Rise a premier facility, of which the members and the community can be proud."

### TOTAL EQUITY CONVERSION

The operational change capped a vigorous one-year period during which BCGM guided the club to a 180-degree financial turnaround.

Hallmarks of the effort, which began in February 2000, include the firm's management of a member-driven \$3.5-million recapitalization, including the equity conversion of all membership classes and the \$1 million gift.

"This member's tremendous show of support for our firm's capabilities is extremely gratifying," said Peter Hill, Billy Casper Golf's CEO. "We routinely steer clubs to financial prosperity, but we've never before received this type of feedback to our efforts."

### CLUB ON FIRM FINANCIAL FOOTING

Prior to the equity-club conversion, Smoke Rise, located 15 minutes from downtown Atlanta, was a refund-type property. Members received a specified refund upon resignation.

"Converting to an equity club places Smoke Rise in a great position, both from financial and marketing standpoints," said club president Gary Sekulow. "Smoke Rise's financial stability is ensured for years to come."

A full-service club, Smoke Rise boasts such amenities as an Olympic-sized pool and a 28,000-square-foot clubhouse.

Membership sales accelerated once word spread of Smoke Rise becoming an equity club. Fewer than 200 full golf memberships remain to be sold.

## Graves & Pascuzzo

Continued from page 20

like Scotland when the winds blow off San Francisco Bay and the shot before you calls for a bump-and-run over a tightly cropped fairway to an undulating green.

The planting scheme at The Bridges was also patterned after Royal Dornoch's gorse-lined hills. Not a single tree was planted on the course. Instead, over 100,000 native shrubs cover the hillsides and rough areas.

The firm's three other new California projects involve The Institute in Morgan Hill, Westbridge in La Habra, and Sterling Hills in Camarillo. They also completed the 18-hole renovation of La Quinta Country Club, a private course near Palm Desert, on the edge of the Santa Rosa Mountains National Scenic Area. Opened

Continued on next page

GOLF COURSE NEWS



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## Two builders

Continued from page 19

said Vince Barraco, senior project manager at Mediterra. "Two full golf construction crews are working simultaneously, and as a result, we have doubled our progress on the North Course.

"An added benefit of the dual team approach," continued Barraco, "is that we are able to be more efficient while developing the course. For example, we can sod the bunkers and mounded areas because they take minimal irrigation. And because we will finish the course six months prior to our grand opening, we can delay planting fairways and ornamentals until the water conditions improve." Florida is in the midst of a crisis-level drought.

### A TREND IN THE MAKING?

Tom Marzolf, senior design associate for Fazio Golf Course Designers, feels this method of golf course construction will be the trend of the future, due to increased demand to build more expensive courses faster.

"Developers today want to build \$8-million courses and have them completed within a year," he said. "Using two contractors simultaneously is a way to meet these deadlines while ensuring the highest quality. There is no other course that I know of, nationwide, that has employed two separate contractors on the same project."

### GIVING MEMBERS A CHOICE

Since construction began on the North

Course, 11 lakes have been constructed, 16 holes have been cleared, six holes are roughly shaped and irrigation is scheduled to begin this spring.

The North Course, designed as a companion layout to the South Course, will also be distinctly different. Greens will be tiered instead of layered, and there will be more green and grade changes. The North Course will also feature naturalized edges to blend with the adjoining wetland areas.

"We want our membership to have the flexibility to choose between two different styles of golf," said Susan Hebel Watts,

vice president of the Bonita Bay Group and general manager at Mediterra. "We feel that they'll appreciate having two courses and two different golfing experiences available to them in the same community."

Like the South Course, the North Course is designed to meet Audubon Signature Cooperative Sanctuary requirements. Both courses are Fazio designs.

### MUCHO MOOLA REQUIRED

The Bonita Bay Group is developing Mediterra in the classical style of Europe's Mediterranean region. The master plan for the 1,697-acre community includes

some 950 residences and more than 1,000 acres of open space. Membership in each golf club is limited to 275.

Mediterra Realty is now offering home sites from \$450,000, coach homes from \$450,000, villas from \$600,000 and single-family homes from \$1.85 million to more than \$5 million.

The Club at Mediterra's 25,000-square-foot clubhouse, which opened in February, is the focal point of the Piazza, which will also include tennis courts, swimming pools and a fitness center. A private beach club with pool on the Gulf of Mexico will be available for resident members. ■

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## Graves & Pascuzzo

Continued from previous page

in 1959, the La Quinta course is a PGA Tour stop for the Bob Hope Chrysler Classic.

### NEW MARKETS IN EAST AND ABROAD

While most of their courses reside in the western states, the start of a new century has taken Graves & Pascuzzo into new markets. This year their designs have reached the East Coast, along with Italy and Japan.

Graves & Pascuzzo recently unveiled two new courses in Massachusetts – Indian Pond in Kingston, and The Ranch Golf Club in Southwick. Indian Pond, a private club, is part of a master-planned residential community owned by Massachusetts developer Fred Tonsberg. This course features holes that wind through heavily wooded foothills.

The Ranch Golf Club, a daily-fee layout, occupied a one-time dairy farm that dated back to the Colonial era. The course's charm and feel reflects the history of the area. The layout, which plays through heavily wooded areas as well as open fields, provides variety and visual appeal.

Also under construction is a new course in Torino, Italy, scheduled to debut this year. The firm is working as well in Japan on the renovation of an exclusive private club in Sapporo called Otaru Golf Club, which will host the Japan Open in 2006.

Graves & Pascuzzo was founded in 1959 by Robert Muir Graves, who was joined by Pascuzzo in 1980. Based here in Northern California, with additional design offices in Oregon and Utah, the firm has designed more than 80 new courses throughout the world and collaborated on the remodeling of some 720 more. ■

## Wolf Creek

Continued from page 1

golf course even be built in this rugged site? Only by playing the course can you appreciate the creativity, tenacity and obvious love of the high desert environment that guided the designer, owner and builder, Dennis Rider.

Rider spent two years walking the 160-acre site to learn how to blend the course into the land-

scape. When construction finally began, he worked with his head superintendent, Kelby Hughes, his son John, three bulldozers, one scraper, and a crew of 30 men to carve out his creation.

Rider and Hughes have worked together here in Mesquite for 10 years, including a stint with Arnold Palmer when he built the Oasis Golf Club in 1995. They have watched the town of Mesquite - 80 miles

north of Las Vegas on I-15 - grow from a truck stop into a town of 20,000.

### HIGH DRAMA ON SECOND HOLE

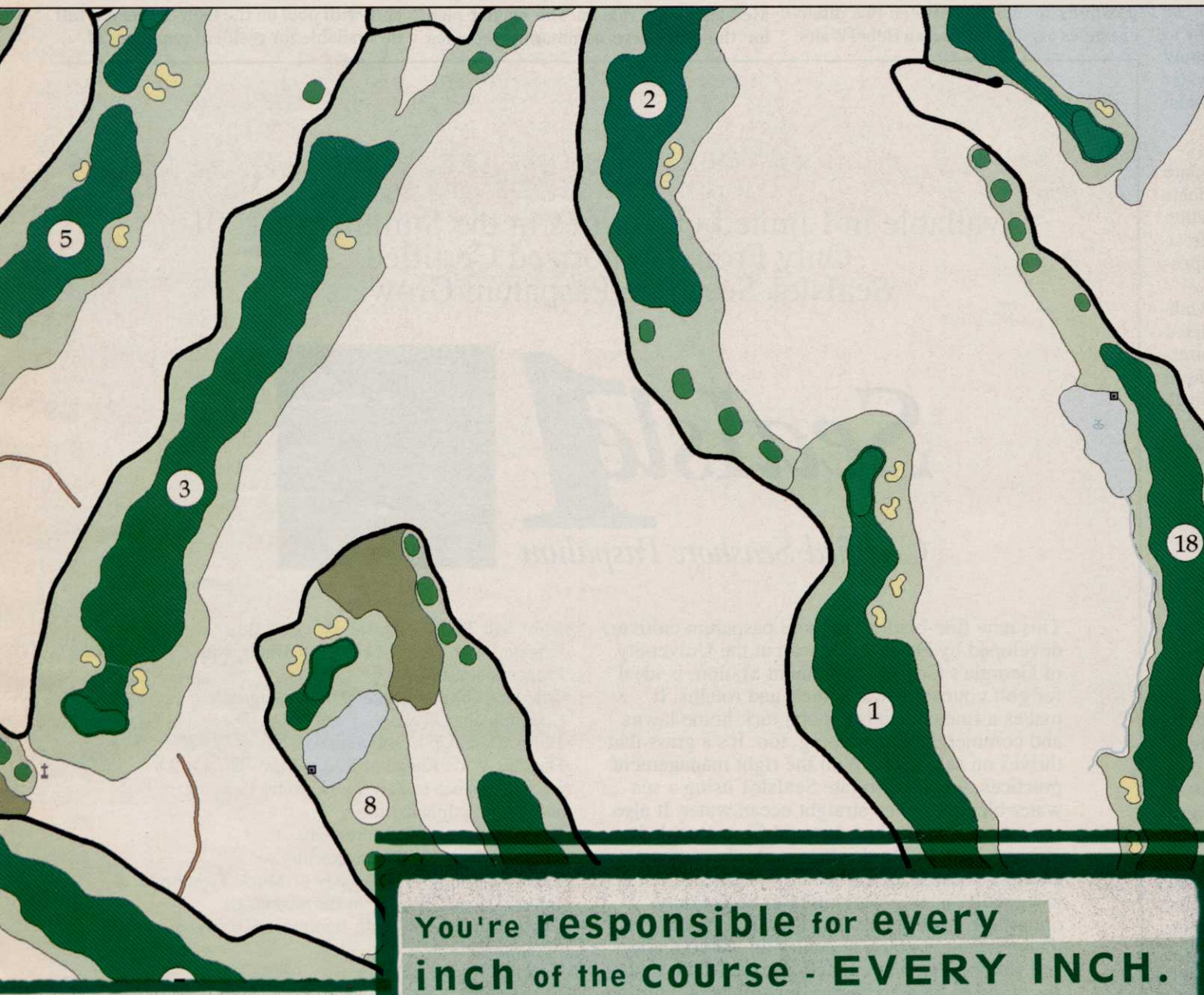
With the opening of Wolf Creek, Mesquite is stepping towards becoming an affordable golf destination to rival Palm Springs and Scottsdale.

"The toughest part in building Wolf Creek was developing a routing with two loops," Rider said. "With this rugged terrain



The 12th hole at Wolf Creek

Photo by Freddi Bird



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you needed to allow players back to the clubhouse after nine. I really just let the land determine where we could go. We did have the chance to add challenge and fun to some of the golf holes."

Rider certainly showed imagination while creating some intriguing golf holes. Five tee shots play off cliffs over 100 feet high.

The most dramatic, the 440-yard par-4 second hole, is played from an 11-story-high tee. A player must climb up 90 sandstone steps to reach a narrow ridge line draped with grass. From here a player must drive the ball 200 yards over another sandstone ridge to the fairway far below. The views are breathtaking and the golf shot is out of fantasyland.

### SLOPE RATING OF 154

This type of feel appears on almost every golf hole at Wolf Creek. From hitting to elevated greens, to gazing down on one of the seven lakes that line the course, to being struck by the contrast of grass, white sand bunkers, and multicolored rocks. You are left questioning if you can even play this wild track. Rider was careful to measure and plot each shot. He added five sets of tees so that any golfer could have a chance.

"The elevated tee shots make it hard to judge distance. But if you choose the proper tees the golf course is very playable," Rider said.

The course plays at 4,169 yards from the front tees and grows to a healthy 7,018 yards from the challenger pegs. From these back tees the course has a slope rating of 154, one of the highest in the nation. From the middle tees the rating is at 134, but a player can still enjoy the round after overcoming the intimidation factor off the tee.

### CHOPPER USED IN CONSTRUCTION

To build this course took special care and ingenuity. The sand cliffs look petrified but are actually very fragile. To protect them, much of the large materials were moved by helicopter, including sod, sand, pipes, and sandstone slab steps.

"We were lucky to have the regional airport right behind the golf course," said Kelly Hughes. "We could bring in materials to the chopper and easily load things on the runway. The chop-

Continued on next page

**HORIZON**<sup>GPS</sup>

HOW TO READ YOUR COURSE.



## Nevada desert

Continued from previous page

per probably added 20 percent to the \$16 million construction costs, but it turned into a huge time saver. We were able to build the course and completely sod it in around 12 months."

The soft sand was conducive to digging and shaping, but special care had to be taken for drainage as heavy rains could lead to flash flooding. A complex system of drains carries all runoff to a drain line that runs under the center of the course.

The course boasts a state of the art dual-pumping system that handles the natural water for water features and collection ponds and keeps that water separate from the reclaimed water that is used for irrigation. Every effort was made to keep these surroundings a perfect natural habitat for the desert tortoise, desert fox, hawks, roadrunners, Gila monsters, tarantulas, and scorpions that thrive here.

### HARVESTING STRAY BALLS

The entire course was covered with hybrid Bermuda sod and Dominant bentgrass sod for the greens. The 49 bunkers are filled with crushed white sandstone that was ground specifically to Rider's specifications for proper color and texture to keep it from blowing away. No extra dirt had to be brought in, as the natural sand was an excellent sub soil for the sod.

"We stress that golfers must stay on the maintained fairways and the golf cart paths because of the fragile nature of the desert," Hughes said. "We provide ball retrievers on the golf carts. If you can't reach a ball that you hit into the desert, you must leave it, as footprints cause immediate destruction of the landscape. We have two workers that go out every month to carefully harvest balls in the sensitive areas so they don't become an unsightly collection."

### WOLF'S NATURAL HABITAT

Rider named the course after the Mexican Wolf that was hunted to near extinction by settlers. He feels that as man nearly eliminated the wolf, man should do something to protect the wolf's natural habitat. This continues to be the driving force behind the course's creation. That sense of wildness exists throughout the layout and will inspire golfers as they enjoy playing in this surreal setting.

"It took nature millions of years to carve out this landscape and we could destroy it in the blink of an eye," Rider said. "Wolf Creek will help to preserve this ecosystem for years to come, while giving people an opportunity to enjoy the desert's great natural charms." ■

GOLF COURSE NEWS

## Monarch Bay

Continued from page 19

"When you're dealing in this part of the world, that's not a huge amount of money," he said. "Also, it included some work on the clubhouse and driving range."

The location of the complex — it lies atop an old landfill —

also drove up the costs. "We weren't allowed to cut an ounce of dirt on the property because of the landfill cap," Harbottle said. "We had to import all the materials we used to form bunkers and greens."

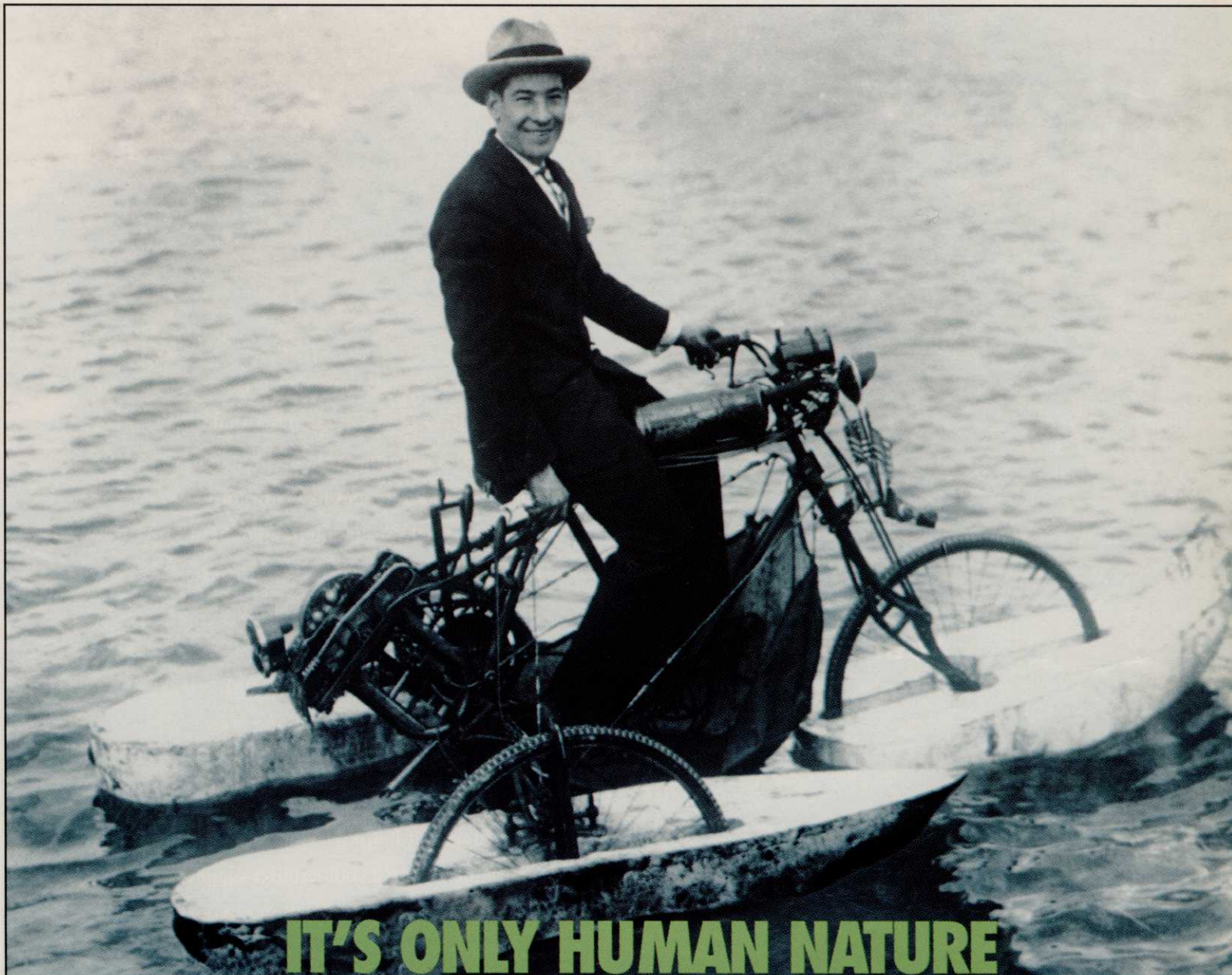
Moreover, the native soil on the fairways was nearly useless as a turfgrass base. "You couldn't grow a thing on it,"

the designer said. Some 90,000 cubic yards of sand were brought onto the site and spread to a depth of six inches. "We placed it everywhere we were going to plant to get a good firm playing surface," Harbottle said. "The fairways are rye, and the greens are L-93 bentgrass."

Wadsworth Golf Construc-

tion handled the heavy lifting.

John Harbottle Design, based in Tacoma, Wash., specializes in new golf course design as well as renovation and restoration of existing courses. A member of the American Society of Golf Course Architects, Harbottle lectures on golf course architecture throughout the country. ■



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## Ross renovation

Continued from page 19

right there on each individual hole plan. It's not just a route plan – these are the original working drawings used during construction.

“The club also has some very good vintage photography, too, so we know quite well what Ross intended this course to look like. Bit by bit,” Silva said, “the scope

of the work changed and eventually the club decided to go the full restoration route.”

### HONING TO VINTAGE STYLE

Working with superintendent Greg Burleson and Gainesville, Ga.-based contractor Course Crafters, Silva will thoroughly restore the Augusta layout.

All 18 putting surfaces will be refurbished in accordance with the Ross drawings. Existing bunkers will be restored in the vin-

tage style. Lost bunkers will be reinstated to their original positions and configurations. And all 18 tee complexes will be rebuilt in the classic, rectangular style Silva employed to such great effect at Biltmore Forest.

“We won't be moving fairway bunkers further down the fairways to accommodate modern play lengths,” explained Silva, “and here's why: Ross used his trademark, random bunker ap-

proach at Augusta. He sprinkled bunkers about the fairways in such a way that they would come into play for everyone, no matter how far you hit it.

“Also, and just as important: the original bunkers were cleverly cut into slight upslopes. Moving them for distance's sake would not allow the bunkers to be placed in such wonderfully natural positions.”

### CLUB'S EARLY DAYS

Formal golf has been played

here by Rae's Creek since 1897, when the nine-hole Bon Air Golf Club began accommodating local members and guests of The Bon Air Hotel, which owned the course. By 1900, when Harry Vardon played an exhibition at Bon Air GC, the facility had expanded to 18 holes. Later that year the hotel renamed it the Country Club of Augusta.

To ease crowding on this so-called Lake Course, club members built another 18 strictly for their use – the Hill Course. Designed by club president Dr. William Henry Harison Jr. and longtime pro David Ogilvie, it debuted in 1909. Summer guests included John D. Rockefeller, Warren G. Harding and William Howard Taft.

In 1921, the club officially settled on its current moniker, Augusta Country Club. Five years later, Seth Raynor would convert the sand greens on the Lake Course to Bermudagrass.

In 1927, Donald Ross – in town to design the Forest Hills Golf Course – was retained to convert the sand putting surfaces on the Hill Course to Bermudagrass. He also substantially rerouted the front nine and completely rebunkered the layout, as detailed on his drawings.

### BOBBY JONES' GRAND SLAM

The Lake Course would not survive the Depression, but the Hill Course not only endured but compiled a luminous tournament history of its own.

Bobby Jones kicked off his Grand Slam year at Augusta CC with a 13-shot victory over Horton Smith in the inaugural Southeastern Open. That was 1930, several years before he would found the adjoining Augusta National Golf Club on the other side of Rae's Creek.

“Like Biltmore Forest, Seminole and others, Augusta Country Club is a great example of Ross' ability to use the terrain to its absolute best advantage,” said Silva, a partner with Uxbridge, Mass.-based Cornish, Silva and Mungeam Inc. “The routing here is superb, but the Ross details need reviving. His working diagrams show putting surfaces that had more undulation than they do today. The work we do this summer will seek to re-instill some of this flavor – within reason, considering today's faster putting speeds.

“The original course was sprinkled with random bunkers throughout the fairways,” he added, “including a really great set of diagonal cross-bunkers on the uphill third hole. There was wonderful flow to the layout, as the fairways sinewed their way around bunkers from tee to green. The working diagrams even show the 16th as a punchbowl green. The club is determined to bring all this back.” ■

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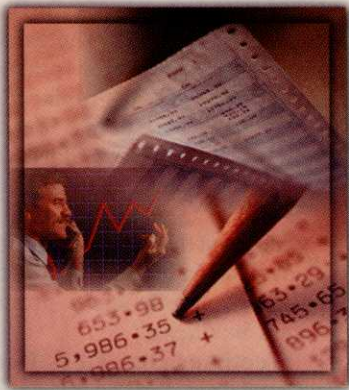
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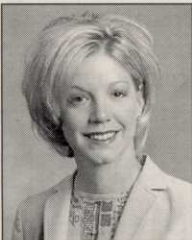
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## BRIEFS

### NELSON TO DIRECT SUNCOR SALES

PHOENIX, Ariz. — SunCor Golf, a leading course management company specializing in high-end daily-fee courses, has hired Tiffany Nelson as director of sales. She will be responsible for generating, booking and executing groups and tournaments at all six SunCor courses in the Southwest. She also will be in charge of promoting and selling SunCor's new Player's Club Card, which enables golfers to play at SunCor's five Arizona clubs for 25- to 50-percent discounts, among other benefits.



Tiffany Nelson

### STRAUSS TO HEAD MARKETING FOR BIG ISLAND COURSES

WAIKOLOA, Hawaii — Kris Strauss has been named director of golf sales and marketing for the two championship courses at Waikoloa Beach Resort. Strauss brings more than 10 years of experience to his new post. He most recently served as director of sales and marketing for OB Sports Golf Management courses in Las Vegas, Nev. Prior to that, he headed up marketing and communications for the PGA of America's Southwest Section.



Kris Strauss

### KEMPERSPORTS PROMOTES DELL, O'BRIEN AND SANDERS

NORTHBROOK, Ill. — General managers Steve Dell and Ron O'Brien, along with head golf professional O.B. Sanders, have all accepted new positions within the KemperSports Management organization. Dell, who was the general manager of Water's Edge Golf Course, in Worth, Ill., will move to the home office in Northbrook as director of golf for Midwest Municipal Operations. He will oversee the Chicago Park District facilities, Vernon Hills Golf Course, Water's Edge, and Golf Club of West Virginia, as well as future municipal properties. Ron O'Brien, formerly general manager of Vernon Hills, will now assume that position at Water's Edge Golf Course. O.B. Sanders has been named general manager of Vernon Hills.

## Z Golf enters management field

By JAY FINEGAN

BEVERLY, Mass. — Michael Zmetrovich, formerly senior vice president at Golden Bear Club Services, has formed Z Golf Properties LLC, a boutique club management, consulting and development company.

The new firm will focus primarily on high-end private clubs, working with them in the areas of planning, design, financing and operations. In addition, Zmetrovich said, the company also will work with select daily-fee facilities, resort properties and master-planned golf communities.



Michael Zmetrovich

### RESOURCE FOR UNDERPERFORMING CLUBS

Already, Z Golf is partnering in the development of a private golf club in Massachusetts. Under the conditions of this long-term agreement, Z Golf will be involved with the planning and design of the entire club and associated residential development. It also will oversee the development and implementation of the membership program and manage the grow-in and opening of the facility. Thereafter, it will handle day-to-day operations.

Zmetrovich is also involved in the development of a private golf club near Denver. In addition, the firm has assumed existing agreements to provide management services to a pair of recently opened Nicklaus-designed private clubs: Pasadera Country Club in Monterey, Calif., and Vermont National Country Club in South Burlington, Vt.

Golden Bear Club Services managed both clubs until the Nicklaus

Continued on page 29



Troon Golf will manage the new Steve Smyers-designed LochenHeath Golf Club

## Troon Golf to run operations at new LochenHeath Golf Club

WILLIAMSBURG, Mich. — Troon Golf has been hired to manage the golf club operations for the new LochenHeath Golf Club, here in the Grand Traverse Bay area north of Traverse City. Builders are now adding the finishing touches.

Scheduled to open next month as the focal point of a gated custom-home community, LochenHeath Golf Club will allow a limited amount of daily-fee play and operate under Troon Golf's private club division — Privé, Private Clubs of Distinction.

### SMYERS' MICHIGAN DEBUT

In his Michigan debut, Florida-based golf course architect Steve Smyers designed the LochenHeath golf course as a sleek and dramatic complement to the rolling topography of the area. Situated in a former cherry orchard along a ridge, with views of Traverse

Bay from 16 holes, boldly sculpted bunkers and native grasses offer visual accents that make every hole memorable.

"There's nothing like it around here," club director Doug Grove said of LochenHeath. "The vistas and bunkering style are new to Michigan as far as new golf development. There may be some older courses with this look, but no one up here has built anything like this in many years. It's a good piece of land, and Smyers is an old-school architect."

Grove said the 7,300-yard, par-71 layout is full of risk-reward situations.

### CLASSICAL BUNKERS

"It's a dry design," Grove explained. "The playing surface is firm, with trouble behind rather than in front of the greens. There are a lot of opportunities to bring

Continued on page 29

## Palmer unveils reciprocity plan

ORLANDO, Fla. — Arnold Palmer Golf Management has given its private club members an extra incentive to look forward to this spring with the unveiling of its Palmer Privileges reciprocal play program.

Designed as a value-added benefit for its private club members, the reciprocal play initiative falls under an umbrella program of member-based benefits called Palmer Privileges, planned for implementation by Palmer Golf. Under the new program, existing members at Palmer Golf's nine private clubs receive complimentary enrollment into a network of more than 50 international clubs and courses.

Reciprocity is a key component of the company's efforts to strategically position its clubs within the marketplace according to Brian Donahue, national director of sales and marketing. In addition, Donahue cites improving

Continued on page 28

## Baine heading up new Ironwood Golf

By JAY FINEGAN

AUSTIN, Texas — Burt Baine, a 25-year member of the PGA of America, has taken over as president of Ironwood Golf LP, a new course development and management firm based here. Ironwood is a subsidiary of Masonwood Development Corp., which creates master-planned residential communities around the country.

"We consider ourselves to be more golf development than management," Baine said about Ironwood. "We very well might manage our own properties, but we might farm that out. Our primary function is development, planning, construction and creation of golf courses."

### FIRST COURSE NEAR AUSTIN

In the past, Masonwood's developments have lacked golf courses, but the company now plans to add them as amenities. Ironwood was formed to handle that part of each project.

"We expect to do quite a number of courses," Baine said. "Ironwood will do market analysis with Masonwood. If we have a 500-acre site, I'll go in first on the golf side and recommend we do a daily-fee or a private course, and jointly we'd develop the project."

Ironwood Golf's initial project is

Behrens Ranch Golf Club. The private course will be part of 580-acre Behrens Ranch, a Masonwood planned community expected to have 900 houses priced up to \$800,000. No architect has yet been named for the course, located near Round Rock, Texas; no builder has been named either, but Baine already has short lists for both.

### TEXAS DEVELOPMENT GOING WILD

The 18-hole layout will be a "traditional Texas-style golf course," Baine said, with few homes planned to front the course proper. "There are homes on five or six holes," he said, "but only on one side, so the golf experience will be a throwback to the old style — fairways and trees. The terrain has some slight roll, being in the Austin hill country, and has some great oak trees."

Groundbreaking is expected by September.

Masonwood has built residential projects all over Texas, and Baine sees opportunities there and in the Southeast. "We like Georgia and the Carolinas, and also Tennessee," he said. "And the real estate market in Texas is incredibly strong. Dallas, Austin, Houston and San Antonio are just going crazy right now with housing developments."

## T-Links, Teetimes.com form alliance

WILLIAMSBURG, Va. — T-Links Inc. and Teetimes.com have reached an agreement for Teetimes.com to be the exclusive provider of tee time technology for T-Links's 150-plus member courses. Regional introduction of the system will begin immediately with the first installation planned for courses in At-

lantic City, N.J.

The five-year partnership agreement will include installation of the Teetimes.com system into T-Links courses in Hilton Head, S.C.; the Sandhills/Pinehurst region of North Carolina; Myrtle Beach, S.C.; Biloxi, Miss., and Charleston, S.C. The Teetimes.com suite includes a

tee sheet and yield management system, integration with existing point of sale programs and real-time on line hotel golf packaging services.

"Teetimes.com provides the mix of technology, reliability and customer service that we were looking for," said T-Links president Terry Sedalik. "We received

very good recommendations from our other regions where their system is installed, including Ocean City, Williamsburg and Virginia Beach. We will begin the installation process on a region by region basis."

### T-LINKS SYSTEM REPLACED

The new reservation system will replace the T-Links system, which was designed and devel-



oped in Myrtle Beach in 1992. The existing computer platform will be replaced by Teetimes.com's Oracle/Solaris network, allowing the regions to take full ad-

vantage of the Internet and other advances in technology to effectively and efficiently promote their business.

Teetimes.com CEO Danny Stoval said the T-Links agreement marks a turning point for the company. "Our biggest challenge is not technology. It's not attracting golfers to our site. It is signing up golf courses," he said. "The T-Links group includes some of the most well-known and respected courses in the country. We are confident that this agreement will provide the catalyst for us to rapidly expand our Teetimes.com course network."

## Marriott Golf sends up Waller

ORLANDO, Fla. — Robert Waller, CGCS, has been named associate director of grounds operations for Marriott Golf.

Waller will assist with establishing preferred vendor accounts while maintaining the existing accounts of Marriott Golf properties. He'll also handle recruitment of superintendents, work closely with the company's golf property development team, and conduct site visits and field reviews of Marriott layouts.

## Palmer plan

Continued from page 27

membership standards for the portfolio as a secondary effect of the program.

"This program strengthens our member benefits at each of our private clubs," Donahue said. "The reciprocity program provides us the opportunity to leverage our marketing within our markets by offering a unique benefit."

In addition to the reciprocal playing privileges at the private and semi-private clubs, members also have access to more than 20 of Palmer Golf's daily-fee facilities nationwide at a preferred rate.

Furthermore, Palmer Golf private club members have reciprocal playing privileges at more than 20 international affiliate clubs through a unique partnership with International Management Group's Sportsclub. These international additions provide members discounted greens fees of up to 50 percent. ■

GOLF COURSE NEWS

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## Z Golf

Continued from page 27

organization's recent restructuring. As senior vice president of the Club Services unit, Zmetrovich was responsible for the day to day and strategic management of all aspects of the company.

During his tenure - 1997 through 2000 - Club Services opened six high-end facilities, including Old Works Golf

Course, The Bear's Club, Vermont National and Pasadera. It also managed 12 different clubs, including the Golf Club of Purchase and Muirfield Village, in Dublin, Ohio.

Zmetrovich also was on the executive committee of Executive Sports International, another Nicklaus division and one of the largest operators of professional golf events in the world.

When Nicklaus shut down the

Club Services division late last year, deciding to focus solely on golf course design, Zmetrovich was left without a job but not without a plan.

### NICHE IN TOP PRIVATE CLUBS

"While a great deal of golf development has shifted to the upscale daily-fee realm, we see a tremendous opportunity in high-quality, well-operated private golf clubs," he said.

"This opportunity extends

both to new projects and to those existing facilities which aren't competing effectively in the high-end marketplace," he added. "Z Golf was formed to provide a resource to these clubs, by combining the highest possible qualitative standards with state-of-the-art financial, human resources and marketing expertise."

Zmetrovich said he's excited to be launching his own company, especially for the opportu-

nity to be a partner in a new private club in his home state of Massachusetts. He grew up in Haverhill, lives in Marblehead and has based Z Golf Properties in nearby Beverly.

"I look forward to not only bringing a world-class golf club to the greater Boston area," he said, "but also bringing a sophisticated, customized approach to member and guest services to different areas of the country." ■

## LochenHeath

Continued from page 27

the ball in either high or roll it in low. A wet design requires you to hit the ball in high and drop it on the green. The bunkering style is classical - very Donald Ross- or Alistair Mackenzie-looking."

"The bunkers are dramatic," Smyers said. "But it is such a wonderful site that with the movement of the land and use of native grasses, we kept them pretty basic. There are 69 bunkers and no water hazards."

The course overlooks Grand Traverse Bay, affording splendid views of Lake Michigan. The lake generates the kind of winds that will undoubtedly affect club selection. "It's going to be like an overseas experience," Grove said, "akin to playing the southwest coast of Ireland, for example."

Grove's favorite hole is the par-3 17th, an uphill 156-yarder with a cluster of five bunkers in front of the green. "There's a lot of movement and roll to the course," he said.

### FULL CADDY PROGRAM

LochenHeath will have a full caddy program. "Our goal is to get people back in the old-school mindset," Grove explained. "We call it understated elegance. You take a caddy, go for a walk, shut your phone off and spend a day with your friends or family. Get away from the hectic pace for a little while."

The LochenHeath development consists of 84 half-acre luxury home sites situated within the golf course and directly fronting the East Grand Traverse Bay, with a shared commons area and access to two beaches. Club membership will be limited to 300 and is by invitation only and available to individuals, couples, families, businesses, and LochenHeath residents. ■

# Tools of the Trade

The advertisement shows a collection of Nutramax products including a large blue barrel of Quelant-Ca, several white jugs of Quelant-K and Quelant-Ca, and several red and green jugs of Macro-Sorb. The products are arranged on a wooden floor in a golf clubhouse, with a large window in the background showing a golf course with trees in autumn. A rake and other golf maintenance tools are visible on the left and right sides of the frame.

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## Heller Financial enters golf lending market

Continued from page 1

team from the company's Chicago headquarters.

With Nekoroski and Seeburger on board, the group will undoubtedly enjoy instant credibility with the golf industry and a canny understanding of the market.

Despite some problem areas in the industry, particularly the

current oversupply of courses, Nekoroski is optimistic about the prospects. "The overbuilding is obviously a big concern these days. A lot of markets have been overbuilt," he said. "But there are still good deals in every market. Those deals will get done, and we hope to get our fair share."

### COUNTER-CYCLICAL LOGIC

The welcome mat is definitely out for the new group.

"Everybody is glad to hear that there's another lender in the business," Nekoroski said. "Clearly, Bank of America's departure left a void, and whenever there's a capital void like that, there are going to be opportunities. That's Heller's

reasoning for getting into the golf business."

According to Lockridge, the decline in golf course values also helped spark the new program. "It's a counter-cyclical situation," she said. "Values have dropped about 15 percent and probably have another 10 percent to go before the operators get back in. You have a segment where there's been some overbuilding, and you've got some illiquidity in the

market.

"Heller likes to get in and lend in situations where you can create value," she added. "We think this sector has some strong upside potential. And that's really where we like to play."



### TARGET: EXISTING COURSES

Nekoroski sees the primary market consisting of course operators looking for acquisitions and course owners in need of refinancing. Experienced course operators, especially those who can run clubs more efficiently and profitably, will receive preferential treatment.

"We are cash-flow lenders," Nekoroski said. "We'll be looking at debt-to-coverage ratios. The main objective will be doing deals with seasoned operators. We'll also be looking at turnarounds where there may not have been great debt service. If it's a turnaround acquisition by a seasoned pro, someone with a proven track record, we most likely will be able to buy into their story and underwrite future potential."

"For more of a 'one-of' type of deal, with somebody who owns one course, we'll want to see some history," he added.

### NO NEW CONSTRUCTION

Loans for new course construction are virtually out of the question, at least for now. "Eventually we may do some," said Nekoroski, "but we're going to take it slow. We want to get our feet wet first with some good solid cash-flowing deals."

Lockridge says the group will be looking to invest in courses priced in the \$4-million range and up.

"Frankly, our goal is to get in and do a bunch of existing courses," she said. "We want to do a lot of acquisition financing. We'll be doing first-mortgage financing on everything we undertake, loaning 50 to 75 percent in the loan-to-cost ratio if it's an acquisition or in loan-to-value if it's a refinance."

The Heller golf team has no predetermined budget or portfolio objective. "Whenever we go into a new business at Heller, we don't set some kind of number to shoot for," Lockridge said. "Our modus operandi is to get into the market and do as much great business as we can."

### INCOME MULTIPLIERS

A big concern right now is that many course acquirers are waiting for prices to fall still lower before plunging back into a buying mode.

"Net income multipliers need to get to 8.5 times trailing 12-month earnings before they'll get



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Continued on page 36

GOLF COURSE NEWS

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## BRIEFS

### SRO APPOINTS DUNN

CORVALLIS, Ore. — Seed Research of Oregon (SRO) has appointed Bill Dunn vice president. Mike Robinson will remain president of SRO, but will take a less active role in the day-to-day management, focusing more on research and international development. Dunn will have operating authority over all areas of the business in Robinson's absence. In addition, Dunn will remain director of sales, marketing and production. Dunn joined SRO last September as director of production and product development and has over 20 years of experience in the green industry.



Bill Dunn

### DROHEN, CARMODY JOIN PURSELL

SYLACAUGA, Ala. — Ed Carmody and Andy Drohen have joined Pursell Technologies as regional sales managers.



Ed Carmody

Carmody will be based in Michigan and will be responsible for the Midwest region and Drohen will be based in Massachusetts and will handle the Northeast region. Both will be in charge of expanding regional markets and increasing sales of POLYON and other products.



Andy Drohen

### SIMPLIOT PARTNERS BRINGS IN SHAFER

SAN DIEGO — Craig Shafer has been named national accounts manager for Simplot Partners. Shafer will be responsible for the development and implementation of sales programs for national accounts and golf course management companies.

### VALENT NAMES FRYE

WALNUT CREEK, Calif. — David Frye has been named marketing manager and alliance manager for Valent USA's Professional Products division. He will oversee the marketing and alliance efforts for the golf course, lawn care, pest control, greenhouse and nursery markets.

## Dow AgroSciences snaps up Rohm and Haas' agrochemicals business

By ANDREW OVERBECK

INDIANAPOLIS — With Dow AgroSciences absorbing Rohm and Haas' Agricultural Chemicals business for \$1 billion, the consolidation cycle in the agrochemicals industry has claimed another victim.

"Everyone is trying to get their businesses bigger," said John Roberts, an analyst with Merrill Lynch in New York City. "It is a business that is research and development intensive and [deals like this] spread the costs over a much larger sales base. It is an economy of scale and productivity-driven consolidation."

### GETTING BIGGER

The acquisition of Rohm and Haas' agrochemicals division, which had sales of \$531 million in 2000, will boost Dow AgroScience's annual sales to \$3 billion, making it the world's fifth largest agrochemical concern. Rohm and Haas was the 15th largest firm.

Under terms of the agreement, Dow AgroSciences will acquire Rohm and Haas' fungicide, insecticide and herbicide lines, trademarks, and licenses to all agricultural uses of its biotechnology assets. Turf and ornamental products in-

cluded in the deal are Dimension, Eagle, Fore and Dithane fungicides and Goal and Kerb herbicides. The transaction is expected to close in the second quarter of 2001.

"These product lines complement our portfolio by adding high performance, brand name products for specialty crops as well as turf and ornamental businesses around the world," said A. Charles Fischer, president and CEO of Dow AgroSciences.

### ROHM AND HAAS PULLS OUT

The transaction also marks the end of Rohm and Haas' 70-year run in the agrochemicals business.

"This is a strategic decision," said George Bochanski, a spokesman for Rohm and Haas. "Over the last 20 years, agrochemicals has been a growing business, but as a percentage of total sales its numbers have been slipping. On top of that we have made significant investments in other areas of chemistry, primarily electronic materials and polymers."

"We realized that we would have to make a significant investment in agrochemicals," he added. "That was an investment that we were not prepared to make."

## NEW CHEMISTRY

### Syngenta rolls out Touchdown Pro, takes on Roundup

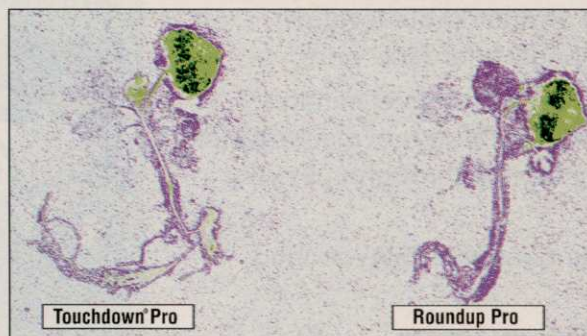
By ANDREW OVERBECK

GREENSBORO, N.C. — Syngenta has rolled out a patented new formulation of glyphosate that is aimed squarely at Monsanto's Roundup herbicide. The company claims that the non-selective, foliar systemic herbicide utilizes a diammonium salt of glyphosate that allows for faster and more complete penetration and absorption of the herbicide.

Due to previous patent restrictions, this is the first year that Syngenta has been able to sell Touchdown Pro in non-agricultural markets.

"The adjuvants in the formulation allow

for the increased effectiveness," said David Ross, Ph.D. "The adjuvants don't cause injury to the plant, allowing cells on the plant surface to fully uptake the herbicide



Touchdown Pro provides more thorough translocation.

and translocate it more effectively. With

Continued on page 34

### Parkway introduces Neo-Tec bio-nematicide

By ANDREW OVERBECK

HOUSTON — Parkway Research has introduced a bio-pesticide that provides preventive control of nematodes. Neo-Tec's active ingredient, plant extract 620, is a combination of oak, sumac, mangrove and cactus extracts. It acts as a barrier between turf roots and nematode activity.

"Whenever a plant grows it releases extracts through its roots that generate bacterial activity but also act as a signaling device for nematodes," said Neo-Tec marketing manager Derek Little. "We put these extracts together with fatty acids

and as they spread out across the soil profile it blocks the nematode, making it harder for them to find the root of the plant that you are trying to protect."

### APPLICATION AND TIMING

According to Little, Neo-Tec works best as a preventive control.

"If you have an existing problem with nematodes, you will continue to have a problem," he said. "Our product is not curative, so you will need to do a knockdown to reduce the population before setting up a barrier with Neo-Tec. If used in concert

Continued on page 33



## Griffin unveils new Concorde formulation

VALDOSTA, Ga. — Griffin has received registration for a dry flowable formulation of its chlorothalonil fungicide, utilizing spray dried technology. Concorde DF can be applied to virtually all turf grass species and varieties, plus over 75 ornamental plants.

Griffin has long been a leader in spray dried technology, developing the technique for the crop protection market 10 years ago, with the introduction of Kocide DF copper fungicide. Using this technology, Griffin has developed Concorde DF, which has quicker dispersion, better blooming and improved suspension characteristics.

"The mixing and handling characteristics of Concorde DF are improved," said Owen Towne, global business director for fungicides.

Concorde DF contains uniform and evenly distributed granules as a result of the processing technology. During the manufacturing, a slurry of the active ingredient and specially selected formulation ingredients is prepared and dried in a tower spray drier. The resulting product pours dust-free.

In field turf and ornamental trials, Concorde DF has demonstrated disease control characteristics that are equal to, and in many cases better than, existing brands of chlorothalonil, under a variety of growing conditions, said Towne.

As a contact fungicide, Concorde DF can be applied all season to control 14 fungal turf diseases, including brown patch, dollar spot, leaf spot, melting out, anthracnose, rust and red thread. Concorde DF also controls algae and can be tank mixed with systemic fungicides. It has a multi-site mode-of-action that doesn't encourage fungicide resistance, making it ideal for all turf disease programs.

## BASF enters strobilurin fray with Insignia

By ANDREW OVERBECK

RALEIGH, N.C. — BASF has entered the strobilurin fungicide market with the introduction of Insignia. When the broad-spectrum fungicide comes to market in 2002, it will compete directly with both Bayer's Compass and Syngenta's Heritage products.

"This new class of fungicides are respiration inhibitors in fungal cells and act on a specific site of action within the fungus," said Jeff Barnes, biology project leader for turf fungicides. "The result is a fungicide that is very active at low use rates in turfgrass and is safe both to plants and animals."

Insignia will control 15 diseases including brown patch, *pythium* blight, gray leaf

Continued on page 34

GOLF COURSE NEWS



## Bayer's sales top \$10 billion

PITTSBURGH — Bayer Corporation's sales climbed 13.6 percent in 2000, topping the \$10 billion mark for the first time. The growth is a result of the successful integration of recent acquisitions and the added capacity and efficiencies Bayer is realizing through its 10-year capital investment initiative. Among last year's acquisitions was Bayer's purchase of Compass, a strobilurin turfgrass fungicide, from Syngenta.

"Our cost savings efforts and our capital investment program paid strong dividends in 2000, helping us increase sales and remain profitable despite rising energy and raw materials costs," said Helge H. Wehmeier, president and CEO. "Bayer is also harnessing e-commerce to lower its procurement costs, streamline order processing and customer service and better manage customer relationships."

Bayer's share of the agrochemicals market is around \$2.3 billion making it the sixth-largest player in the industry.

— Staff reports

## Howard Fertilizer develops alternative mole cricket control

ORLANDO, Fla. — Howard Fertilizer, one of the Southeast's largest manufacturers of custom-blended fertilizers, has developed Turf Pride Delta GC Plus Fertilizer as an alternative insecticide for controlling mole crickets.

Turf Pride Delta GC Plus Fertilizer is a combination fertilizer with insecticide for golf courses and

sod farms. Unlike other mole cricket treatments, it's an environmentally safe alternative. Created by Aventis Environmental Science, Delta GC is a pyrethroid, a synthetic version of pyrethrum. Pyrethrum is a naturally occurring insecticide produced by chrysanthemum plants. Not only is it effective in controlling mole crickets,

it also controls numerous other insects, such as sod webworms, ants and chinch bugs.

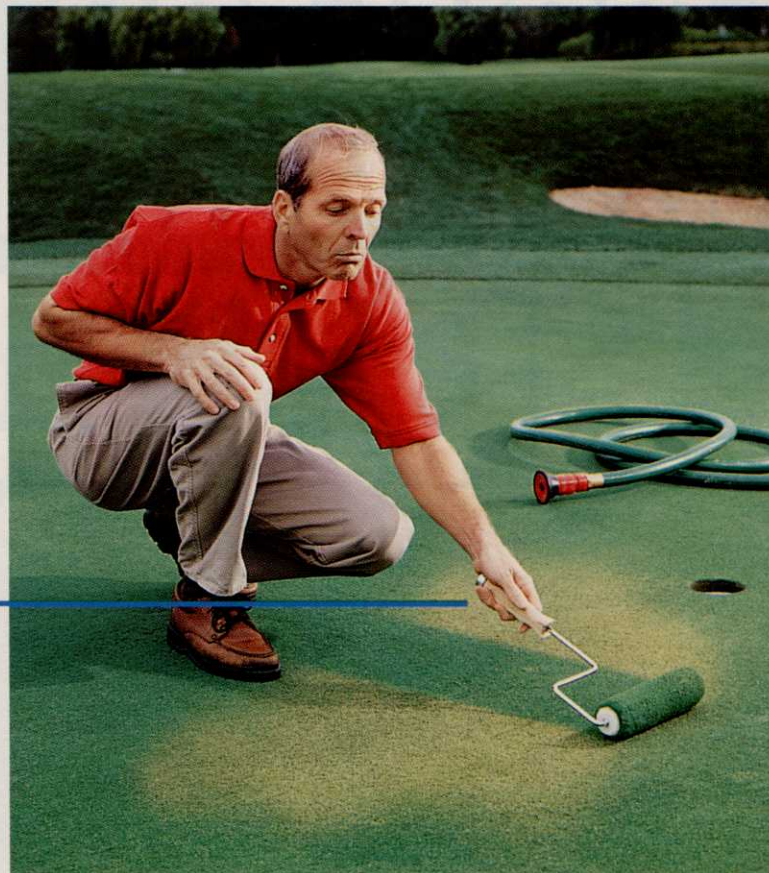
The product is less expensive than other treatments, works effectively in low doses and does not smell or stain. Its irregularly shaped granules dissolve quickly, leaving almost no particles to be picked up by birds

and other species.

"Howard Fertilizer wanted to offer an insecticide and fertilizer that helps golf courses control mole crickets and be more environmentally safe," said James Brown, president of Howard Fertilizer. "We also wanted to offer a treatment to golf courses that could save them time and money."

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## Neo-Tec

Continued from page 32

with traditional nematode controls it will reduce the possibility that nematodes become resistant to traditional nematicides."

Timing is also critical when applying Neo-Tec.

"Plants are most vulnerable when they undergo periods of rapid growth," said Little. "For example, it should be applied before grass comes out of dormancy, before fertilizing with a phosphorous fertilizer or before aerating. Depending upon cultural practices, it should be applied every eight weeks."

### PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT

Neo-Tec was developed from a biostimulant that was sold into agricultural markets in South and Central America. The plant extracts were used to build up soil structure because they cause cell division in certain beneficial bacteria in the soil, increasing the plant's ability to absorb nutrients from the root zone.

"We found that the extracts also had an effect on nematodes and that if we added a fatty acid as a surfactant it would act as a nematode-control product," said Little.

Since this is the first time the product has been used in the United States, Parkway is continuing to do turf research with the product. "We are building the research right now," Little said. "But we are treating nematodes, not plants, so we are confident that it will work just as well on turf as it does on bananas." ■

**Touchdown Pro to rival Roundup**

Continued from page 32

[traditional] glyphosate you see an effect in 10 to 14 days. With our formulation you will see effects a couple of days sooner and the consistency of control will be improved."

The corn-based surfactants assist in wetting the leaf surface and neutralizing positively charged calcium and magnesium ions that

can tie up glyphosate, rendering it unavailable for uptake into the plant. The formulation also enhances the translocation of the herbicide through the weed's vascular tissue to the shoots, roots and rhizomes. Diammonium salt also has no odor.

**USE ON THE COURSE**

Just like Roundup, Touchdown

Pro is most likely to be used in spot backpack applications for control of weeds and as a method of killing off areas of old turf. "The product is perfect for renovation of fairways," said Ross. "Since it has no residual activity you could come in and seed a fairway seven days after an application."

The product can also be used in the wintertime to control weeds on Bermudagrass or

zoysiagrass fairways. "You can use the product any time the plant is growing," he said. "But we have a stronger application rate that will work for getting perennial weed control during the winter."

Cost and application rates per acre will be similar to Roundup, said Ross. The product is currently registered in most states and full registration is expected this spring. ■

**BASF's Insignia**

Continued from page 32

spot, summer patch and snow mold.

In addition, Insignia will have significantly more activity on certain diseases, said Barnes. "It will have improved control on *pythium* blight, gray leaf and dollar spot and it can be used at

extended intervals," he said. "It can also be used curatively



once disease has already appeared and has a higher level of general activity on some of these fungi compared to other products."

Insignia also offers longer periods of control and provides control at rates two to 10 times less than those for conventional fungicides.

**PREVENTING RESISTANCE**

Insignia will be used primarily as a preventive application.

*'It will have improved control on pythium blight, gray leaf and dollar spot.'*

— Jeff Barnes

"This gives the greatest amount of control," said Barnes. "Also, because strobilurins are single site inhibitors they are considered to be prone to resistance development so we have to be very careful on how we use them and how we time the application of materials to make sure we prevent resistance."

**EPA AND RESEARCH**

The product is currently in the registration process with the Environmental Protection Agency and is expected to clear regulatory hurdles by the end of this year.

In the meantime, BASF continues to conduct university research across the country. "We have tested it in around 40 states," said Barnes. "It will be useful on most every golf course across the range of cool and warm season grasses and will offer season-long control of turfgrass diseases from brown patch to *pythium* blight to snow mold." ■

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## Dealers bear brunt of the used market risk

As the equipment manufacturers and dealers work to reduce risk for the superintendents buying used turf equipment, dealers and wholesalers are facing financial risks of their own.

"We are always scrambling for financing," said Edward Balulis, president of American Turf, a used-equipment company in Tampa, Fla. "You have to have a good line of credit because you are bidding on packages of \$450,000 or more."

"Getting rid of the equipment is not hard," he said. "But buying it at a deal and then turning it around and making a good profit is harder."

High residuals are also a concern, according to said Gary Callahan, vice president of Boyton Beach, Fla.-based Kilpatrick Turf.

"I am on a finance committee with Textron and one of the things we are looking at is fair market value," he said. "We have to put some criteria on the number of hours and the maintenance of the unit. If the equipment comes back in pieces and we still have a 20- or 30-percent residual on it, then the customer has to be responsible for refurbishing it or we are not obligated to take it back."

### MORE COMING OFF LEASES

These concerns will loom larger as more and more equipment starts to come off leases.

"The first true leases were not written in significant quantity until the late 1990s. Most were 48-month leases and those are starting to mature and coming home to roost," said William Robson, director of marketing for Textron Golf Turf and Specialty Products. "It is adding a whole new dimension to the business."

Manufacturers are quickly realizing that their ability to make new leases hinges on the ability of distributors and dealers to get rid of used equipment.

"We are forced to get smart fast," said Paul Danielson, finance marketing manager for Toro Co. "We are not where we want to be yet. Most of our distributors don't have the capacity to service used equipment. There are some longer term issues that we are wrestling with to make it work in the long haul."

These issues are perplexing dealers.

"It is a little scary. What is going to happen in two years when all these units start coming off leases? Is it going to flood the market? Or will the demand still be there?" said Balulis. "I know someone that is sitting on \$800,000 in used equipment from leases right now, and in 2003 he has \$2.5 million coming in."

— Andrew Overbeck

## Market for used turf equipment strong despite structural concerns

Continued from page 1

must be a strong market for used equipment. Compared to the secondary market for golf cars, the used turf equipment market is untested and fragmented.

"Golf cars have a very strong secondary market both at lower-end courses and other markets such as campgrounds and factories," said William Robson, director of marketing for Textron Golf Turf and Specialty Products. "With used turf equipment, the application is not as broad. But at the same time, the market has never seen three- and four-year-old high quality diesel fairway mowers for sale."

"This is an emerging market," he added, "because for the first time there is a good supply of reasonable quality used equipment available for sale."

### CREATING A MARKET

With the introduction of quality used equipment to the market, more courses are taking advantage of the lower prices.

"In the past five years, it has become a big business," said Gary Callahan, vice president of Boyton Beach, Fla.-based Kilpatrick Turf, a Textron distributor. "With a \$30,000 piece of equipment you are looking at a \$6,000 residual after three years and you can turn around and sell it for \$12,000 to \$14,000. That is not a bad deal for a course that cannot afford to buy new."

As a result, manufacturers are expanding their market reach.

"This allows us to reach markets that we have been unable to reach in the past," said Aaron Wetzel, John Deere's national sales manager for golf and turf. "There is a huge demand out there from courses that would like to have the ability to en-

hance the quality of the golf course but at a lower budget level."

In addition to selling into low-end courses, used equipment is also in high demand as grow-in equipment at new courses. Higher-end courses are also purchasing used equipment to fill gaps or back up existing equipment during the peak season. Buying used specialty equipment such as power bunker rakes and aerators is also especially popular.

"Maintenance equipment is expensive, and to maintain a course you need a lot of different pieces," said David McCoy, president of Capri Isles Golf, which operates three semi-private courses in Florida. "Golf is not as profitable as it used to be due to competition and the cost of keeping the course in shape. Between the three clubs, on average, we buy three used pieces of equipment each year."

In addition to markets in the United States, a large amount of used equipment also is finding its way overseas to courses in the Pacific Rim, South and Central America, and Europe. "The overseas market is big," said Edward Balulis, president of American Turf, a used-equipment concern in Tampa, Fla. "A new fairway unit that would sell for \$40,000 here goes for as much as \$90,000 overseas, because of the 40- to 60-percent import tax on new equipment. On used equipment, the tax is about 15 percent, so a used one sells for around \$30,000."

### REDUCING THE STIGMA

For the secondary market in the United States to flourish, however, customers must be comfortable with the quality of the equipment.



## NEW PRODUCTS

### Miltona's new leveling tool eases irrigation head and valve box installation

Miltona has introduced the Ground Zero Leveler, a common sense solution to installing sprinkler heads and valve boxes properly the first time. The unit allows all makes of heads and boxes to be clamped into place and held in a level position during installation. This lets the installer have both hands free for back filling and tamping. The



Miltona's leveling tool

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### Toro ready with powerful Groundsmaster 4000-D

The Toro Co. has introduced the Groundsmaster 4000-D, an 11-foot rotary mower that features three independent cutting decks allowing it to handle both wide open areas and trim areas. The unit is powered by a 58-hp turbocharged Kubota diesel engine. Full time, bidirectional 4-wheel drive delivers excellent traction and hill climbing ability. For more information, contact 952-888-8801 or [www.toro.com](http://www.toro.com).



Toro's Groundmaster 4000-D in action

"There is a certain amount of stigma associated with used equipment," said Wetzel. "To gain customer confidence we tie a one-year warranty to John Deere ProConditioned equipment."

John Deere has instituted a three-level system that rates each piece of used equipment. ProConditioned equipment represents the top of the line used equipment.

"ProConditioned equipment is fully serviced and comes out in pretty much new condition," said Turner Revel, owner of Revel Tractor Co. in Raleigh, N.C., who sold close to 300 ProConditioned units last year. "We make sure that there is no excessive wear on the machine; everything is looked over. We consider it remanufactured."

Creating a comfort level among superintendents, however, may vary on a regional basis, said Textron's Robson.

"Superintendents will compare notes on their experiences," he said. "I would not be surprised if the comfort levels were regional based, upon experiences with dealers or the condition of the products coming off leases."

### BUYERS BEWARE

Indeed, with the market growing, there are more disreputable companies entering the business, cautioned Greg Wright, president of Statewide Turf Equipment in Sarasota, Fla. "You need to know who you are dealing with," he said. "There are a lot of companies that are getting in and out of the market right now that are just tearing the market up."

McCoy agreed. "You need to have a good mechanic and go see the piece of equipment," he said. "Don't buy it sight unseen. Make sure that the company is reputable and that they will stand behind the equipment. And talk to others who have bought from them." ■



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**Heller Financial**

Continued from page 30

off the sidelines," Lockridge said. "They are currently at about nine. People will jump back in when they perceive that we've hit bottom. But if multiples remain high, that means acquisition activity will be low, which will affect what we're able to do."

Nekoroski is aware that buyers are looking to bottom feed, but flexibility may be the best approach, he said. "Some of the more astute guys are jumping in now, saying that if they wait for a 25-percent drop, they might let three great deals go right under their noses."



He added that Bank of America abandoned the golf market not because of overbuilding or any other specific concern. "The reason they cut the cord was at a much higher level, over global and economic issues," he said. "They saw the economy starting to waver, and they decided to cut the more risky portfolios—or those perceived as risky."

In Nekoroski's view, Heller will be a solid financial partner for golf borrowers. "This is a great company," he allowed. "I've been very impressed with them in the short time I've been here."

The new unit is off to a quick start. "We've hit the ground running," said Nekoroski, who was already reviewing five or six proposals a few weeks after joining the firm. "The deals are out there." ■

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19-23 — 18th Annual American Society of Irrigation Consultants Conference, Savannah, Ga. Contact: (925) 516-1124.

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15-17 — The Fertilizer Institute Agri-dealer Legislative Conference Washington, DC. Contact: www.tfi.org.

19-21 — Turfgrass Producers International (TPI) Conference and Expo Toronto, Ontario, Canada. Contact: 800/405-8873.

25 — Northeastern Pennsylvania Turf School and Trade Show. Contact: (814) 863-3475.

**AUGUST**

2 — New Jersey Turfgrass Association/Rutgers Golf & Fine Turf Field Day. Contact: (732) 821-7134

4-5 — Florida GCSA Annual Meeting. Contact: Tom Crawford (941) 922-2141.

22 — Michigan Turfgrass Field Day, Michigan State University. Contact: Kay Patrick, (517) 321-1660 or www.michiganturfgrass.org.

30-Sept. 1 — International Golfing & Turfgrass Maintenance Exhibition Dalian, Liaoning, China. Contact: 86-411-2826339.

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7-8 — Southwest Horticultural Trade Show. Contact: (480) 966-1610.

9-11 — World Fertilizer Conference, Chicago, Ill. Contact: www.tfi.org.

15-18 — CMAA Leadership/Legislative Conference, Pentagon City, Va. Contact: www.cmaa.org.

19-20 — Canadian West Horticultural Show. Contact: (604) 574-7772.

24-26 — PGA International Golf Show, Las Vegas. Contact: (203) 840-5468.

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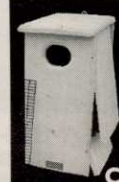
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