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RENOVATION COMMUNICATION

In the latest installment of a series tracking the progress of the renovation project at Willoughby Golf Club in Stuart, Fla., superintendent Kevin Downing outlines the need to keep members informed about the progress of renovation work (members playing on a soon-to-be-closed green are pictured above). He also discusses the ins and outs of the bidding process. See page 12.

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COUNTERPOINT

New Bayer ES head: 'Bar has been raised'

By ANDREW OVERBECK

MONTVALE, N.J. — The field of major agrochemical players narrowed further in late May as the U.S. Federal Trade Commission (FTC) approved Bayer AG's acquisition of Aventis CropScience from Aventis SA and minority owner Schering AG (GCN July 2002).

The buyout marks the demise of another multinational player and the creation of Bayer Environmental Science.

Josh Weeks, former vice president of Aventis Environmental Science's Chipco Professional Products group, will head the new professional products division of Bayer ES.



Josh Weeks

DIVESTING FIPRONIL

One of the first challenges facing Weeks will be the forced divestiture of two key product lines. As part of the approval, both the FTC and the European Commission are requiring Bayer ES to dispose of its fipronil and acetamiprid product lines.

While acetamiprid is a neonicotinoid class of chemistry that is being developed primarily for the greenhouse industry, the fipronil divestiture will directly impact the golf market. As part of the deal, however, Bayer ES will

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Quarry Hills sets new opening date

By DEREK RICE

QUINCY, Mass. — Reports of the death of the Quarry Hills Golf Course outside of Boston are greatly exaggerated, according to one of the project's developers, Chick Geilich.

"It's interesting how the stories get totally twisted," Geilich said. "We extended our contract with the Big Dig to accept 50 percent more dirt than our original contract and as a result of bringing in this extra dirt, we are a year behind our original projected finishing date."

In recent months, published reports have suggested that the development had stalled because of run-ins with city officials and a lack of



With nine holes completed, Quarry Hills is looking toward an early 2003 opening.

Photo by Arthur Cicconi

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Lahontan Golf Club pushing organic boundaries

By DOUG SAUNDERS

TRUCKEE, Calif. — While other courses in the High Sierra are considering what synthetic materials to use to jump-start spring turf growth, Lahontan Golf Club here is taking an organic approach. Each spring, head superintendent Kevin Breen's crew diligently spreads 43 tons of chicken crumbles on the 130 acres of fairways to build up the soils before opening day.

Six years of organic efforts at Lahontan, an 18-hole Tom Weiskopf-designed course, have begun



(Left to right) Mike Kosak, Martyn Hoffman and Kevin Breen

to pay off. Each year Breen has been able to cut back on his annual synthetic fertilization to sustain a

healthy stand of turf.

The direction toward an organic maintenance program was put into place

when construction began under the watchful eye of Mike Kosak, the director of agronomy. This enclave of mountain homes and the only private golf club in the Lake Tahoe region has stressed a careful environmental program to blend the development into the natural landscape with as little intrusion as possible.

Kosak has strived to utilize organic farming methods to make this property sustainable for

Continued on page 10

Management companies holding on

By DEREK RICE

SANTA MONICA, Calif. and CHARLESTON, S.C. — Two financially troubled golf course ownership and management companies — National Golf Properties (NGP) and Golf Trust of America (GTA) — received reprieves of sorts in July from their creditors.

NGP, which has continued to push toward a merger with its largest ten-

ant, American Golf Corp., despite pressure from shareholders, has reached an agreement with its lender, Bank One N.A., to extend the forbearance period on NGP's \$300 million credit line until March 31, 2003. As collateral, NGP granted mortgages and deeds of trust on its properties. The company has been in technical default

Continued on page 15

Weeks reformulating Bayer ES

Continued from page 1

be allowed to license back its fipronil products (Chipco Choice, Top Choice and Fire Star) and compete alongside the purchasing company.

"The trademarks for Chipco Choice and Top Choice will remain with Bayer, and Fire Star will go to the acquiring company," said Weeks. "As Bayer

sells these products, it will be with those provisions. In all likelihood the golf business will have two suppliers of fipronil that will be sold through different brand names."

Bayer has six months to complete the divestiture of fipronil. It remains to be seen what definitive interest, if any, top industry players such as BASF, Dow

AgroSciences, or Syngenta Professional Products have in acquiring the product line.

FORMING A NEW TEAM

Weeks' other challenge is pooling the best talent from each organization. The integration process will happen in stages over the next several months and two key appointments have already been announced. Dan Carrothers, formerly the head of sales and marketing for Bayer GPC, will

head the U.S. green industry business for Bayer ES, and Nick Hamon will head development and technical services, a position he previously held at Aventis Environmental Science.

"We will continue to operate in parallel throughout the integration process, but by 2003 we will be on a combined platform operating as one company," said Weeks.

According to Weeks, the big-

gest benefit the buyout will provide to superintendents will be the ability of the combined com-

'We are all about investing, developing and delivering new tools for the golf industry'

— Josh Weeks

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1 My primary title is: (check one only)

- A. Golf Course Superintendent
- F. Course Owner
- L. Golf Course Management Company Executive
- B. Green Chairman/Grounds Director
- C. Director of Golf/Head Pro
- D. Club President
- E. General Manager
- K. Assistant Superintendent
- G. Builder/Developer
- H. Architect/Engineer
- I. Research Professional
- Z. Others allied to field: (please specify) _____

2 My primary business is: (check one only)

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- 22. Private Golf Course
- 23. Semi-Private Golf Course
- 24. Municipal/County/State/Military Golf Course
- 25. Hotel/Resort Course
- 26. Par 3/Executive Course
- 27. Practice Facility
- 29. Other Golf Course (please specify) _____
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3 Number of holes:

- A. 9 holes
- B. 18 holes
- C. 27 holes
- D. 36 holes
- F. More than 36 holes
- Z. Other (please specify) _____

4 Purchasing involvement: (check all that apply)

- 1. Recommend equipment for purchase
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- 3. Approve equipment for purchase

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pany to concentrate on research and development.

"We have the capability to bring new technology to the market faster," said Weeks. "The bar has been raised. New products are going to have to be more effective, less expensive and distinguish themselves from other products on the market. We are all about investing, developing and delivering new tools for the golf industry by focusing more research dollars on the task at hand." ■

GCSAA plans show changes

Continued from page 16

working to create several return on investment formulas, improve location selection and increase superintendent attendance.

"At the spring IAC meeting we decided that we should take a more hands-on approach to the show," said Mike Scaletta, advertising and promotions manager for John Deere Golf and Turf. "We need to act now to keep the show vibrant five to 10 years from now. Shows don't die overnight, they slowly erode."

With marketing dollars harder to come by, many exhibitors on the council said their booths might be scaled back next year.

"We are responsible for making sure people come to our booth, but we also have to make sure it makes financial sense," said Dave Heegard, vice president of sales and marketing for Pursell Technologies Inc. "On the other side, the GCSAA is responsible for putting together shows in venues that attract a majority of their membership."

Arredondo and his staff are now working to provide incentives for both exhibitors and members.

While he wouldn't specifically say what the GCSAA had in store, Arredondo said there are plans to co-market the show with industry partners and put more education sessions and activities directly on the show floor. Arredondo also confirmed that the GCSAA is having discussions with the National Golf Course Owners Association about the possibility of combining efforts and creating one show for superintendents and owners. ■