

GOLF COURSE NEWS

THE BUSINESS NEWSPAPER FOR THE GOLF COURSE INDUSTRY

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Velocity kills Poa dead

By ANDREW OVERBECK

EAST LANSING, Mich. — Managing Poa annua has traditionally been an inexact science, but researchers here at Michigan State University (MSU) along with chemical maker Valent USA, said they have discovered a postemergent herbicide that controls Poa and certain broadleaf weeds in bentgrass and ryegrass fairway turf.

"Velocity controls Poa," said Jason Fausey, field market development specialist for Valent. "We are used to managing it, so this is a different approach."

Valent acquired rights to Velocity in the turf and ornamental market from Kumiai Chemical. The Japanese chemical maker has rights to the agricultural market where the herbicide is currently registered for use on rice to control barnyard grass. Velocity's active ingredient, bispyribac-sodium, inhibits the enzyme acetolactate synthase, which plants require to produce three key amino acids.

Valent submitted its approval package for Velocity to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency in April. Company officials said

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Management cos. buck bum economy



The slumping economy has helped ClubCorp, which owns Pinehurst No. 2 (pictured above), focus on lowering overhead costs.

By DEREK RICE

With rounds played numbers down, revenues flat and an economy suffering through ups and downs, there is little doubt that now is a difficult time to be a golf course owner or operator.

For management companies, the challenge of staying afloat is multiplied by the number of properties they either own or operate, each of which comes with its own set of issues and competition in a particular market.

Perhaps surprisingly, many management companies are not

only surviving this economy, but they are actually thriving. The reasons for this are as varied as the companies themselves, but it would seem that a down time is a good time to be in the management business.

John Beckert, president and chief operating officer for Dallas-based ClubCorp, said his company has been able to hold its own for a number of reasons, including the sheer size and scope of its portfolio.

"One of our biggest advantages as a management company is our

size," he said. "Because we have almost 200 other golf and business clubs and three marquee resorts, when we go in and associate with a new club on a

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Editorial Focus: Utility Vehicles

Competition expands utility vehicle choices

By ANDREW OVERBECK

With new players on the scene and a bevy of new product introductions slated for the next six to 12 months, competition is heating up among utility vehicle manufacturers. Never before have superintendents had this many utility vehicles to choose from.

Yamaha Golf Car, E-Z-GO and Jacobsen all have new utility vehicles coming out this summer, and both John Deere and Kubota will unveil plans for new vehicles this fall. Toro said it will add an electric version of its Workhorse

utility vehicle line in early 2004.

This spring, Club Car introduced the Carryall 272XL, Lesco rolled out its first utility vehicle and Polaris came to market with an entry-level product to fill out its line.

YAMAHA'S NEW LINE

A year after opening its \$31 million manufacturing facility, Yamaha Golf Car (YGC) is set to introduce a new lineup of utility vehicles June 7. In a move to bring



A spy photo of Yamaha Golf Car's new utility vehicle

a consistent look across all
Continued on page 19

The First Tee shows major gains in '02

By DEREK RICE

ST. AUGUSTINE, Fla. — In its fifth annual review, distributed in late April, The First Tee reported revenue of more than \$6.8 million in 2002.

The unaudited review reports that 52 percent of the organization's revenue came from oversight organizations, 42 percent from fundraising and 6 percent from sponsorship. After factoring in expenditures, the organization ended up with a cash surplus of nearly \$400,000, bringing its total cash on hand to nearly \$6.7 million.

The numbers seem to support what The First Tee

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POINT

Jim Koppenhaver of Pellucid and M.G. Orender of the PGA of America weigh in on strategies to grow golf.

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COUNTERPOINT



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Drought conditions linger in Western U.S.

WASHINGTON—The National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) reported in its latest seasonal drought assessment that conditions should improve across the Midwest and into the High Plains, while limited improvement is expected across the West outside of the Great Basin and the Southwest.

The forecast improvement does not necessarily mean the end of drought problems, according to NOAA officials, because it will take a long time to eradicate drought in areas where moisture deficits are especially large, such as western Nebraska and western

South Dakota. Some locations in northwestern Missouri, where low

Dakota and North Dakota, drought may largely persist.

Long-term moisture deficits still prevail across much of the West, so even the normal mountain snow pack observed in some states this spring will not be enough to bring significant relief to water supplies except in scattered locations. In many western areas, water shortages are expected to continue through July. The odds for improvement in the hydrological drought are lowest in the Great Basin and the Southwest due to low snow pack or the limited precipitation expected during this time of the year.



Golf 20/20 approves school program pilot

PONTE VEDRA BEACH, Fla. — The executive board of Golf 20/20 approved the test strategy for a National School Golf Program and has targeted the 2003-2004 school year for a pilot program.

The primary focus of the program, which is designed to give children a positive first experience

in golf, will be to provide schools with a curriculum, equipment and training for physical education teachers. Schools that accept the program will be asked to implement it for two weeks in the fall and two weeks in the spring. The test program is aimed at 80 to 100 schools across the country. About half of

these schools will receive funding from the golf industry through Golf 20/20. The remaining schools have local funding sources available.

Benna S. Cawthorn, a former physical education teacher and youth sports program director in the Orlando area, has been hired as director of the program.

NGF report shows lower participation rates in 2002

JUPITER, Fla. — On the heels of its 2002 rounds played survey, the National Golf Foundation released its forecast for participation in 2003, which continues the trend of less than hopeful news coming out of the golf industry.

According to the "Golf Participation in the U.S., 2003" report, the number of total participants fell 1.1 percent to 36.7 million. The NGF said this was mainly driven by a 36.2 percent decrease in the use of golf ranges and alternative short courses.

These downturns overshadowed a 38.6 percent rise in the number of junior golfers (age five to 17) and a 1.6 percent rise in the number of golfers 18 and over. The NGF defines golfers as those who have played at least one regulation round of golf in the last 12 months.

The slide in the number of best customers, defined as those who either play 25 or more

rounds a year or who are members of households that spend more than \$1,000 a year on golf, may be of particular concern to the industry. In 2002, there were 8.9 million of these best customers (34 percent of total golfers) who accounted for 80 percent of the golf spending in the United States. This number was down 9 percent from the 2001 total of 9.8 million, which represented 40 percent of all golfers.

The NGF's participation report may also provide some insight into the drop in the total number of rounds played last year. The number of avid golfers (those who played 25 or more rounds a year) fell for the second straight year, which the NGF said likely fueled the drop in 2002 rounds played numbers.

One segment of the population that could contribute to future growth is women. Currently, only one-quarter of all golf participants are women.

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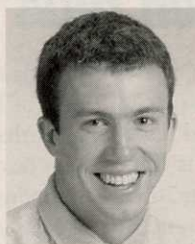
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When we spoke with some of our advisory board members earlier this year to discuss presenting a golf course with a renovation award, we knew we were onto something big.



Andrew Overbeck, editor

We knew renovation work was becoming more prevalent as many courses recognized they needed to reinvent themselves to keep up with the competition that sprouted up during the late '90s. Now we wanted to recognize their hard work. But how?

After months of sorting through the many variables and consulting industry insiders, we have come up with a framework for the *Golf Course News* Renovation of the Year Award.

While renovation work is extremely complicated and laborious, we have designed the Renovation of the Year Award to be exceedingly simple. Courses may nominate themselves by going to www.golfcoursenews.com and downloading the required entry forms and sending them into our offices. We will be soliciting entries

throughout the summer and early fall and a board of industry experts will make a decision on a winner before the end of the year. *Golf Course News* will present the award to the golf course and the superintendent at a gala event at the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America Conference and Show in San Diego in February 2004.

Special recognition will also be given to the course architect, builder and participating vendors.

The forms cover two specific areas regarding renovation work. The first section relates to the basics of the renovation and provides a snapshot of the project, why was it undertaken, what was the scope and what was the cost and economic return.

While we recognize that courses are mainly embarking on renovation projects to realize economic gains and make their courses more attractive than the one down

the street, we also recognize that more courses are taking an environmentally sensitive approach (often by necessity) to renovation work. Therefore, the winner of the Renovation of the Year award will not only have to implement a successful renovation project from a design and business perspective, the winner will also have to demonstrate that the project has resulted in environmental enhancement.

So think about the work your

course has done and visit www.golfcoursenews.com to check out the nomination forms and criteria. If you haven't done renovation work at your course, perhaps you know of a recently renovated course that deserves recognition. Let them know about the award or drop us a line and we'll contact them. We look forward to hearing from you and learning about the hundreds of innovative renovation projects from across the country.



POINT

Closing the back door

By JAMES KOPPENHAVER

We at Pellucid Corp. completed our 2002 Golf Participation Perspective and one of the surprising findings in our analysis of golf consumer survey information was the fact that golf lost almost a million players in 2002 vs. 2001. Even more concerning was the fact that this net loss of golfers was in a year where the industry attracted 2.1 million new golfers to the game but lost over three million golfers at the same time. We refer to this as golf participation's "back door" and it is our assertion that the shortest route to a healthier golf consumer base is by closing the back door vs. current continued industry efforts to welcome more golfers in the "front door." Before proposing some suggestions on how to fix this current challenge we need to first take a look at our interpretation of how we got here.

One of the tried and true maxims of marketing is that customer retention is infinitely easier than attracting new customers. Applying that to golf, it would seem natural that initial "grow the game" efforts should gravitate toward the easier solution of retention. The challenge is the industry's inverse relationship between where the money is vs. the parties responsible for front-line execution. The people in the best position to influence retention (existing operators primarily) have been financially challenged for the past several years. Conversely, the organizations with the money (primarily industry organizations) have little interest in or access to executing a retention strategy. Perhaps the underlying reason is that the industry organizations support programs primarily for public relations and there's not nearly the PR value in "keep a person in golf" vs. "convert a person to golf."

The "back door" theory is not a new revelation for the industry. Back in 2000, the inaugural gathering of industry leaders at Golf 20/20 set a



Jim Koppenhaver

Editor's note: Both participants in this month's Point/Counterpoint recognize the value of both attracting new players to golf while at the same time retaining players. Rather than debate which is more effective, we asked them to focus on one of the two.

Continued on next page

COUNTERPOINT

Opening the front door

By M.G. ORENDER

Golf is a great game, and golf is a great industry. A rose-colored view, many readers might think, particularly golf course facility owners and managers who have seen a 3.1 percent national decline in rounds played from 2000 to 2002. A Pollyanna outlook, it might seem, to equipment manufacturers and the golf shops and stores that sell their products, who have been experiencing a dramatic fall in unit sales and total dollars spent.

Certainly, these are facts that cause all of us in the industry an immense amount of concern. There is no doubt that those of us with a vested interest in the game of golf cannot afford to let this serious situation go unchecked. However, this is exactly why golf is such a great game, and why golf is a great industry. We hear time and time again the untiring lauds of golf as a game of honor, integrity, fun, health, and a way in which family, friends and business colleagues can come together. Equally as important, though, is the fact that golf also is a game that has a remarkably strong infrastructure – a blend of governing bodies and business entities that are willing to work together for the good of the industry. In short, if we have a problem, we have the combined will and resources to identify the source of the issue, and we have a unified passion, vision and ability to find and implement a solution.

Case in point has been the annual gathering of the industry's stakeholders and decision makers at the Golf 20/20 conference at the World Golf Village in St. Augustine, Fla. We all shared a grave concern for the future health of our game, we came together under the Golf 20/20 umbrella to discuss and identify



M.G. Orender

Continued on next page

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Close the back door

Continued from previous page

2020 target of increasing golf participation to 55 million. That target was comprised of losing 500,000 fewer golfers each year and acquiring 500,000 more golfers each year off an estimated base of two million golfers entering and leaving the game each year, according to the National Golf Foundation (NGF). At the end of 2002 the scorecard on their efforts is mixed, based on the fact that the acquisition rate has gone up slightly (100,000 more than their two million base but well short of the 500,000 increase target), while the retention goal is nowhere near the fairway at a loss of over three million golfers vs. the target of 1.5 million. Consistent with our above argument that attraction is easier for outside entities and retention is more suited for existing stakeholders, the burden of responsibility shifts back to the existing owner/operators. So what are potential solutions to helping interested parties close the back door?

Pellucid is doing early stage work in helping existing owner/operators focus on retention at facility levels. The challenge for them is that they have frequent contact with their customers and the technology to capture some or all of those interactions yet they fail to do so. Working in conjunction with a handful of forward-thinking golf course operators and existing point-of-sale providers, we have developed the initial applications to help facilities capture a higher percentage of their customer transactions and improve the quality of their e-mail capture for more efficient marketing. By outlining a process to tie customers to transactions, we help them track changes in the customer franchise in real-time to identify and communicate with customers identified as "at risk" based on frequency of play and spending patterns on a monthly basis. Through a combination of consumer surveys and anecdotal conversations with knowledgeable industry veterans, it seems to us that keys to retention revolve around player involvement and ability levels.

Involvement is the challenge of the industry to continually work on the "bottom tier" of

uncommitted golfers. Pellucid believes that there are nine million golfers who fall in the uncommitted category, which are defined in 2002 as players playing one to four rounds per year. Given past indicators, all nine million of those uncommitted golfers are at risk to become former golfers based on their current involvement. The other factor is ability level, with a documented large number of golfers playing the game at a low ability level as well as making marginal improvement year-to-year. Facilities have the ability to increase the frequency level of play among the uncommitted if they first could identify them in their midst. The facility also has the vehicle to improve the ability of players through more creative efforts at game improvement than have been exhibited to date, and operational issues have overtaken instruction in the job descriptions of many PGA professionals.

On the bright side, the previous financial hurdle of small marketing budgets and expensive direct-mail distribution can be replaced by relatively affordable data analysis and distribution of messages to specific customer segments of a course's customer base. Broadcast e-mail is a great starting point and is inexpensive. By breaking down the customer database into smaller segments, a course can also use affordable selective direct mail.

Unfortunately, because this drama is being played out on a stage consisting of 14,000-plus independent facilities, the likelihood of waking up one morning with a significant gain in the industry-level scorecard is slim. More likely is that the more forward-thinking operators will begin executing some of these programs in their own enlightened self-interest and have success in their own local market(s). In time, this development will hopefully set off a chain reaction in which the remaining operators will have to follow, and eventually a gradual industry-level reversal in the trend will appear. To paraphrase, our suggestion to individual owner/operators might be, "Don't ask what the industry can do for you, ask what you can do for yourself."

Jim Koppenhaver is the president of Pellucid Corp., a golf industry information and insight provider.

Open the front door

Continued from previous page

the areas of concern and now, more than two years later, we are beginning to see a real course of action beginning to take root. One of the preeminent messages that came out of the Golf 20/20 conference last fall was that we must find ways to implement programs that not only attract new players to take up the game, but also encourage existing players to play more frequently.

This was a message that clearly resonated with industry leaders. The PGA of America, in particular, has aggressively begun to focus on industry wide initiatives that focus on igniting an interest in golf participation. We know that our members are uniquely qualified to play a major leadership role in implementing a series of programs and initiatives to grow the game and reverse the downward trend in rounds played and overall participation. We know that 40 percent of the people who watch golf on TV don't play. Therein lies the foundation of our future opportunity, and The PGA of America has been mobilizing various segments of the industry to capitalize on this prospect of growth.

As such, The PGA of America has begun to unveil plans for a number of innovative grow the game initiatives, and the flagship of this collaborative effort has been the Link Up 2 Golf program. This effective program, as reported last month by *Golf Course News*, will this year expand to 34 new markets and is rapidly becoming known as "America's Welcome to Golf Program." Already with a great deal of success to its name, the premise of Link Up 2 Golf is to create a fun and relaxed environment for beginners to learn the game, and for former golfers and occasional golfers to connect or reconnect with golf.

The first pilot for Link Up 2 Golf was born out of the 2001 Golf 20/20 conference. The promising results are evidenced by the 1,200 students who have since enrolled. With the 34 new markets, our goal is that each of the multiple facilities within each market will usher at least 50 students a year through the program. Ongoing, we'll expand to new markets to attract even more new players, and we'll continue to unveil complementary grass roots programs to ensure that those new players have a reason to stay in the game. Those other programs already include: Play Golf America; the President's Council on Growing the Game; Golf: For Business and Life; Best Practices Resource Center; and collaboration with both the National Recreation & Park Association and the Executive Women's Golf Association. All of these initiatives are supported by The PGA's newly-created Player Development Department at PGA Headquarters.

As we continue to exploit the Link Up 2 Golf model, along with the other PGA grow the game programs, and bring more players to the game, that growth in the number of golfers will translate to more rounds and increased revenue across the board — green fees; lesson and caddie fees; golf car revenue; ball, equipment and merchandise sales; food and beverage; hotel rooms at golf destinations; ratings for golf telecasts, etc.

There is a considerable economic and universal upside to how the golf industry has responded to a clearly identifiable problem, and how leaders such as The PGA of America have taken the initiative to collaborate to drive golf's consumer base with programs such as Link Up 2 Golf. Not many industries can say that. Isn't golf a great game? Isn't golf a great industry?

M.G. Orender is the president of the PGA of America.



MAILBAG: 'Municipalities should cease new golf course development'

TO THE EDITOR:

As your recent article regarding municipal golf summarizes ("Municipal golf under siege" *GCN* May 2003), municipal golf courses are also experiencing the difficult economic conditions that many privately owned golf courses have been encountering.

Many golf course owners across the nation will tell you that the rapid growth in municipal golf courses is a contributing factor to the well-known supply/demand imbalance. Such new projects are often created through political empire-building and misguided views that government has the obligation to supply affordable golf to its citizens — in competition with private enterprise.

Government has no more a responsibility to supply affordable golf than it does to supply affordable haircuts or golf course architectural services. Private industry handles these needs more than adequately.

There are many in the golf industry — those

who cash checks, versus the owners and investors who write the checks — who view more municipal golf courses as good for business. They are entitled to their position, but should experience the situation where local government decides that there are not enough affordable golf course architects and enters that business at cut-rate fees.

When many cities and local governments experienced financial problems in the 1980s they realized that they should not only cease new golf course development, but privatize the operation of their existing courses. I believe that this message was lost in the 1990s and will soon be rediscovered.

Sincerely,
Matthew Galvin
Board Member
New Jersey Golf Course Owner's Association

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BRIEFS

THE VENICE G&CC TAKES HOME CONSERVATION AWARD

SARASOTA, Fla. — The Sarasota County Conservation Committee in partnership with Sarasota County Environmental Services has selected The Venice Golf and Country Club as a recipient of its 2003 Resource Conservation Award. The annual award recognizes those who take a leadership role in promoting conservation of the county's natural resources. The Conservation Committee is a coalition of representatives from local businesses, civic organizations and government. The Venice Golf and Country Club is the first golf course to be recognized by the committee.

MGA NAMES MCMANAMIN

NORTON, Mass. — The Massachusetts Golf Association (MGA) has named Tom McManamin superintendent of its newly opened Norton Golf Facility. McManamin comes to the course from Worcester Country Club where he was first assistant superintendent. McManamin earned a certificate in turfgrass management from the University of Massachusetts at Amherst in 2002.

THOMPSON GOES TO GREATE BAY

SOMERS POINT, N.J. — Grete Bay Golf Club has named Kenneth B. Thompson superintendent. Thompson spent the last 15 years as superintendent of Stone Harbor Golf Club in Swanton and brings 20 years of industry experience to Grete Bay. Prior to Stone Harbor, Thompson was the second assistant superintendent at Merion Golf Club in Ardmore, Pa.

WHITE JOINS MOUNT SNOW

MOUNT SNOW, Vt. — The Mount Snow Golf Club has named Bryan White its new golf course superintendent. White comes to Mount Snow from Santa Fe, N.M., where he was a superintendent at The Club at Las Campanas, a private 36-hole facility. Prior to Las Campanas, White worked at various golf clubs in Colorado, Pennsylvania and Maryland.

Winterkill research yields new clues

By KEVIN J. ROSS, CGCS and ANDREW OVERBECK

One of the most difficult times of year for Snowbelt superintendents is the moment of truth each spring when they find out how well their winterkill prevention activities worked. Prior to and during winter, superintendents face numerous choices concerning ice and snow removal, free water removal and the use of covers. However, winterkill remains an enigma, because what worked one year does not necessarily work in another year.

Research on winterkill has been going on for decades and a miracle cure is yet to be found. But researchers are focusing in on several aspects of winterkill causes to try and pinpoint the exact reasons why damage occurs.

In general, winter damage is defined as any injury that occurs during the wintertime period. Winter damage can be inflicted by: winter turfgrass fungi (snow molds and cool season pythiums), crown hydration, ice damage (suf-

focation), direct low temperature kill and desiccation. Of these, only true winter diseases and desiccation are understood, while ice cover damage and crown hydration are still not totally understood.

DOES ICE COVER KILL?

For years ice damage has been associated with a gas build-up that occurs just under the ice surface. Under prolonged ice cover, oxygen is depleted from the plant that is still under very low levels of respiration and microbe activity. This results in an accumulation of toxic gases that may result in death of the plant. Superintendents generally follow the rule that *Poa annua* can survive under ice cover for up to 60 days, while bentgrass can survive up to 90 days. This rule, however, is being revisited.

"There is a popular theory that if the ice remains on turf for too long that you end up with dead

cause of suffocation. That is why you see devastating ice damage only once or twice a decade. If suffocation caused damage, people would get it every year because there are parts of the



Significant winterkill damage impacted courses from Minnesota to Maine this year.

turf," said Dr. George Hamilton, assistant professor of turfgrass science at Penn State University. "Why it happens has not been shown or even if it happens be-

country that get extended ice coverage all the time."

While not all of his *Poa annua* data was available at press time,

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Hofstetter: Overtime top budget buster

By ANDREW OVERBECK

LAKELAND, Fla. — Former Meadowbrook Golf/International Golf Maintenance executive Greg Hofstetter has formed a consulting venture to give golf course owners maintenance support without taking over complete control of their operations.

Hofstetter, who was vice president of golf operations for Meadowbrook/IGM for seven years, believes that his new firm, Agronomic Systems, fills a growing need in the golf business.

"Owners, whether they are private, municipal or daily-fee, have a difficult time giving up control to a golf course management company to outsource maintenance when they are not seeing a guaranteed return," said Hofstetter. "Even though IGM assures them they get



Greg Hofstetter

more control, which is true, it is difficult for owners to see that and feel that. That is the biggest single selling challenge. I saw an opportunity to help courses without making them feel like they were losing control."

Agronomic Systems provides golf course evaluations that show courses where and how they could save money. So far, Hofstetter has done evaluations for 23 courses including Valdosta (Ga.) Country Club, Widow's Walk Golf Club

Continued on page 8

HoleView teams with Audubon

INNSBROOK, Mo. — HoleView has teamed up with Audubon International to produce environmental yardage books that educate golfers on the benefits of the Audubon certification process.

HoleView recently created a yardage book for Innsbrook Resort Golf Course here, which has been certified as an Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary course. The book brings environmental accomplishments to the attention of golfers.

"Golfer support for environmental quality is key to a course's success in protecting water, wildlife and other natural resources," said Audubon International president Ron Dodson. "The HoleView yardage book invites golfers to take a closer look at how Innsbrook Resort is protecting and enhancing its environment through Audubon certification."

SUPERideas

Early brush gets the worm

We use a carpet dragmat on our greens three times a week prior to mowing. Initially, we were simply trying to knock down the dew and nutrients, plus stand up our turf for an improved cut. We brush five consecutive days after our biweekly vertical mowing during our active growing season, and this is when we stumbled on an awesome integrated pest management tool. We found that we were absolutely destroying cutworms and armyworms by brushing them while they were up feeding in the dark. This has also helped our budget, because now we mechanically control the worms enough to reach an



James Lettau drags the 17th green at Magnolia Plantation to remove both dew and worms.

acceptable threshold without using insecticides.

Now if we could just find something for these mole crickets...

— Brad Stuart, superintendent, Magnolia Plantation Golf Club, Lake Mary, Fla.

Got a SUPERidea? Email yours to aoverbeck@golfcoursenews.com

TOOLS OF THE TRADE

Ward's Olympia Fields CC is ready for U.S. Open play

By ANDREW OVERBECK

OLYMPIA FIELDS, Ill. — Dave Ward has seen his share of master plans in his 13 years here at Olympia Fields Country Club. The latest batch of design changes were drafted by architect Mark Mungeam in preparation for this month's U.S. Open, but Ward has spent nearly his entire tenure at the club working on one renovation project after another.

When he arrived in 1991, Ward went to work on a rehab plan (also prepared by Mungeam) for both the North and the South courses. When the club got the 1997 U.S. Senior Open, the plans for the North Course, which was designed by Willie Park Jr. in 1923, were accelerated.

"We redid the whole thing," said Ward. "We redid all the bunkers, rebuilt half the tees and moved the fifth green back away from the sixth tee. We did all that work in 1995."

The USGA, however, wanted to take it up a notch for the U.S. Open.

"For the U.S. Open we had to deepen bunkers, steepen banks and get them tucked in tighter to the green," Ward said. "We also added more length and narrowed the fairways."

In addition to regrassing all greens with L-93 creeping bentgrass, two greens were rebuilt to minimize slope and add more pin placements.

"We had greens with 4.5 percent slope through the green with cupping areas at 2.5 to 3 percent slope. So we rebuilt them," said Ward. "They look the same, we just took some tilt out and created some forward hole locations."

HANDLING THE CHANGES

As with all renovation work, however, some changes went more smoothly than others did.

When the club revamped its irrigation system, it built a lake to store water on-site to improve efficiency. Previously the irrigation water was pumped out of the ground and directly into the irrigation system. However, making that switch exacerbated the course's problem with its high-bicarbonate irrigation source.

"Our water has high levels of bicarbonates as it is," said Ward. "The lake is connected by a stream channel that gets run-off from a road complex, so in the spring we get a lot of sodium coming in."

In a normal summer, rain would help flush the soils of sodium, but last year's drought took its toll on the turf. Ward has since

installed a sulfur burner and started applying high-cal lime and gypsum to knock down the sodium levels in the soil.

Ward also had to make a major adjustment with the irrigation system around the new, steeper bunkers.

"We have really heavy clay soils here and the irrigation we put in was not sufficient to keep the banks healthy," he said. "So we installed another 451 spray heads around 42 different bunkers and instituted a foliar spray program for those banks."

PREPPING FOR THE OPEN

This winter Ward and his crew did tree work to clear up shade issues around greens and make room for spectator bleachers, TV towers and vendor tents. Now Ward is making the mad dash to the finish and hoping that soil temperatures and growing conditions come along for the ride.

Once the Open is over, however, the renovation work will pick up right where it left off. Sometime this summer, Ward will be turning his attention to the South Course, which has been patiently waiting its turn for a face-lift.

"The master plan on the North Course is done," he said. "If all goes well, we will start on a big project on the South Course this summer. It's a great golf course, and I'd like to get working on it."



Dave Ward

WARD'S TOOLS

GREENS MOWERS:

14 John Deere 180 B

TEE MOWERS:

15 John Deere 220 B

FAIRWAY MOWERS:

7 John Deere 3515 B

ROUGH MOWERS:

4 Bevco Superflex

RIDING BUNKER RAKE:

4 John Deere Bunker rake 1200 A

TURF UTILITY VEHICLES:

21 Turf Gator, 7 ProGator

BEDKNIFE GRINDER:

Anglemaster 300

IRRIGATION PUMP STATION:

Flowtronex, 3,600 gpm

IRRIGATION SYSTEM:

Rainbird Cirrus

GOLF CAR FLEET:

E-Z-GO

FLAGSTICKS:

Laser Link

COMPUTER & ACCESSORIES:

1 Dell, 1 Gateway

PRIMARY HERBICIDE:



The 10th hole at Olympia Fields CC, site of this month's U.S. Open

VERTI-CUT REELS:

6 Thatch Away

AERIFIERS:

3 John Deere Aercore 800, 1 John Deere Aercore 2000

TOPDRESSERS:

2 Dakota 410

TOURNAMENT SPEED

ROLLER:

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GCSAA posts financial information online

By ANDREW OVERBECK

LAWRENCE, Kan. — In a move to become more transparent, the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America's (GCSAA) board of directors has decided to post its pertinent financial documents as part of the "About GCSAA"

section of its Web site.

The IRS Form 990 for the GCSAA and the Environmental Institute for Golf for the period from June 2001 to July 2002 are available in addition to salary ranges for staff and specific salaries for executive positions.

According to GCSAA commu-

nications director Jeff Bollig, the information posted on the Web site has always been available through the association's service center in paper form, but board members decided that the financial details should be made more easily accessible.

"There has been a lot of talk of

financials over the years and the board wanted to put as much as possible on the Web," he said. "As much as our members like to think that we are not open, we are terribly open."

In addition to salary information, the association posted IRS forms that reveal the



GCSAA lost more than \$1 million over the period including investment losses that totaled almost \$1 million. The Environmental Institute for Golf posted a loss of

\$590,931 including investment losses of \$581,002.

For more information, visit www.gcsaa.org.

Agronomic Systems

Continued from page 6

in Scituate, Mass., and Newnan (Ga.) Country Club.

"I show them where they can save money or reallocate funds," Hofstetter said. "Many courses are reallocating saved money back into the course and improving the facility. So they are not taking money away from superintendents."

According to Hofstetter, the single largest culprit blowing maintenance budgets is overtime.

"A lot of clubs are running excessive amounts of overtime," he said. "I walk in and see courses running 25 to 30 hours of overtime a week in non-peak months. In that situation, it is cheaper to hire an additional worker."

Hofstetter said inventory control is another area where money can be saved.

"A majority of the time, instead of using one product to solve a problem you see the kitchen sink being thrown at a problem. I identify the fact that one product can fill a need, not seven products," he said.

Other areas that are covered in the evaluation are organization, shop cleanliness, detail around the facility and time and efficiency studies.

In addition to the evaluations, Hofstetter brings the power of national accounts to his clients.

"We have national account status behind us that can produce significant cost savings," he said. "The national account groups I work with have known me for a number of years and see the amount of business that I generate when I recommend products, purchases or materials."

Once he has finished an evaluation, courses can choose to bring Hofstetter back in quarterly, monthly or not at all. He currently visits four clubs monthly and 12 courses quarterly to provide follow-up services.

Looking ahead, Hofstetter said he would like to team with smaller management companies.

"Companies with four to five courses don't have the income to hire a full-time agronomist, but they could utilize Agronomic Systems to provide a higher level of maintenance to their customer." ■



IT'S AN ENDURING SYMBOL OF FREEDOM
BROWN PATCH AN

Valent's Velocity to offer courses Poa control

Continued from page 1

Velocity's low use rates, favorable toxicology profile and the fact that it is already approved for use in other markets should speed the EPA approval process.

Velocity is approved for use under special local needs in

Georgia, Florida and South Carolina to control *Poa annua* in overseeded ryegrass fairways. A special local needs label for Michigan is currently pending.

Velocity has a wide application use since most courses across the country view *Poa annua* as a nuisance.

"Bentgrass and ryegrass are very tolerant overall," Fausey said. "There is some potential for slight discoloration, but what we have seen is very slight."

Poa annua, on the other hand, is not tolerant at all. Growth usually stops three to seven days after treatment and *Poa annua*



MSU's Ron Calhoun (second from left) gives researchers a tour of test plots

Photo: Andrew Overbeck

turns yellow or brown within three to 14 days after treatment. It dies approximately 21 to 28 days following treatment.

SOBER ASSESSMENT REQUIRED

Since Velocity effectively eliminates *Poa annua*, leaving bare earth behind, application rates and timing will depend on the goals of each individual course.

"A sober assessment of *Poa* populations is required," said MSU research specialist Ronald Calhoun. "On the label it should say 'Caution: this will work.'"

Initially, Velocity will be labeled for fairway use between June 1 and Sept. 1. For courses with a high percentage of *Poa annua*, Calhoun said two applications at a rate of 30 grams on Aug. 15 and Sept. 1 would be the best fit for most courses trying to control *Poa annua* in their bentgrass fairways. A late-season application allows for reseeded bentgrass at a time when the level of play is lower.

According to Fausey, a new course that has 5 percent *Poa annua* can take more of a maintenance approach.

"A new course could go in with a higher rate at one to two applications a year and control *Poa*," he said. "The percentage of turf that is removed will be filled in quickly so it won't be as noticeable."

RESEARCH ON GREENS APPLICATIONS ONGOING

Calhoun and Fausey are continuing research on how best to use Velocity on greens.

"We are taking more of a transition approach," said Fausey. "We have had good results with low rate applications through the summer months and we are getting 50 to 60 percent control in the following year. But we need to do more research to get more comfortable with greens use."

In addition to working on plots at MSU, Calhoun has been doing work with area golf courses to get a better sense of how effective Velocity is under the daily stress of traffic and compaction.

Research work on postemergent goose grass control and crabgrass control is also continuing. ■

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Carbohydrates may hold winterkill key

Continued from page 6

Dr. Dave Minner at Iowa State University has found the same inconsistencies in the first year of his two-year winterkill study.

"We had four inches of snow and four inches of ice on both bentgrass and Poa annua for 60 days and it didn't kill the bentgrass," said Minner. "It has

slowed the green up and killed some Poa but more died under the dry and open conditions."

CARBOHYDRATES COULD BE KEY

Hamilton said his research shows that ice is far more likely to cause damage if the plant has low carbohydrate levels.

"We looked at carbohydrate levels and we found a connection

between levels of carbohydrates and the ability of the plant to withstand icing," he said. "Stressed turf is more susceptible to ice damage."

According to Interlachen Country Club superintendent Matt Rostal in Edina, Minn., going into winter with stressed turf may have been the cause of the winterkill he suffered on several greens, despite using covers.

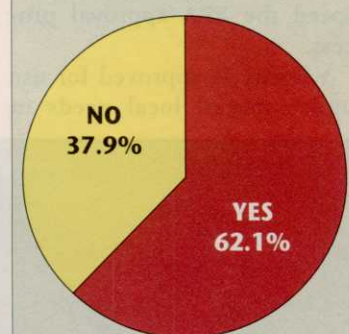
"We had the Solheim Cup last September and that's usually the time we are supposed to be getting everything healthy going into winter. Instead I cut them as short as I ever do and kept them lean on fertilizer, which was not preparing them for winter," said Rostal.

Brendan Parkhurst at Cape Arundel Golf Club in Kennebunkport, Maine, believes his greens got damaged more se-

GOLF COURSE NEWS POLL

THE BUSINESS NEWSPAPER FOR THE GOLF COURSE INDUSTRY
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Did you experience winter damage this year?



verely for the very same reason.

"It think it had a lot to do with drought carry-over from last summer," he said. "We didn't get a lot of rain in the fall so the plant didn't get a chance to heal up."

CROWN HYDRATION DEMYSTIFIED

The mechanisms that cause crown hydration are thought to occur when hydrated plants become subject to a rapid decrease in temperature. Crown hydration, or dehydration as is more accurate, happens from both inside the plant tissue (intracellular) and from outside the plant tissue (extracellular).

Intracellular crown dehydration is believed to happen when the water around the cells inside the plant suddenly freezes. This draws the water out of the cell, causing a dehydrated situation and resulting in death of the plant.

However, there is certain debate as to when this can actually happen. James Ross, a researcher at the Prairie Turfgrass Research Centre in Olds, Alta, Canada, believes that the plant must break dormancy and begin to hydrate prior to the freeze process. According to Ross, the transition from winter to spring is the most critical for damage to occur because of the dehardening of the plant.

"Generally when the plant begins to break dormancy, it takes on water, which hydrates the crowns and reduces the simple sugars, which protect the crown through the winter and make it much more susceptible," he said.

Extracellular crown dehydration happens similarly, except it is believed that ice formation outside the plant takes place and pulls the water out of the plant by osmosis. This results in dehydration and may result in death of the plant.

SOLUTIONS ARE FEW

As the research continues, new theories are being developed and the impact of individual weather events are becoming more and more clear. However, with so many variables involved, it will take many years of on-course experience to ever develop a fail-safe strategy to reduce winterkill damage. ■

GOLF COURSE NEWS

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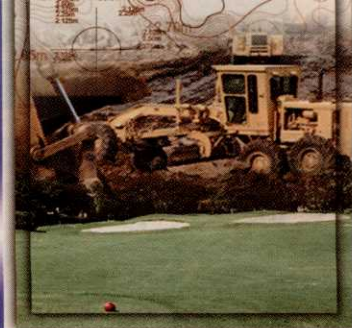
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DEVELOPMENT & RENOVATION



BRIEFS

PANKS COMPLETES ALIANTE DESIGN

SCOTTSDALE, Ariz. — Gary Panks Associates recently completed the design of Aliante Golf Course in North Las Vegas, Nev., which is a joint venture between Del Webb Corp. and American Nevada. The course, which will be managed by OB Sports, is currently under construction with a Dec. 2003 opening scheduled. The course will feature 54 bunkers and 14 bridges. Greens surfaces feature TifEagle bermudagrass and the fairways and roughs will be Tifway 419 bermuda.

METAIRIE CC RESTORING ITS RAYNOR DESIGN

METAIRIE, La. — Metairie Country Club is undergoing a restoration of its Seth Raynor-designed course, under the supervision of architect Ron Forse. The course had lost its character over the years, as its features softened. With no room for expansion, the members decided the best way to remain competitive in today's market was to restore the course to its 1920s luster, according to director of golf Greg Core. Construction began in January, and the course is expected to reopen in September. Raynor's original design included replicas of holes from famous courses of the day, including the Old Course at St. Andrews, National Golf Links and Shinnecock Hills.

FARMLINKS TO OPEN JUNE 3

SYLACAUGA, Ala. — FarmLinks at Pursell Farms, a combination golf facility and testing ground, will officially June 3 with a fundraiser for juvenile diabetes research. The Hurdzan-Fry designed facility will serve as a laboratory of sorts for Pursell Technologies Inc. and its supplier partners to test products and technologies. It also provides an opportunity for the suppliers to demonstrate their products — both current and prototypes — to visiting superintendents who are invited for a two-day seminar.

'Aggressive' construction starts at Sunday River

By DEREK RICE

BETHEL, Maine — While plans are in the works for an official groundbreaking here at Sunday River Golf Club, construction is moving forward aggressively, according to Susan Duplessis, corporate communications manager for Sunday River.

"The 18th tee box and fairway are shaped, and work has begun on the driving range," she said. "The area for the clubhouse is being cleared and other miscellaneous work has begun as well."

Site work is also ongoing for the ninth fairway. As for the official groundbreaking, Duplessis said Sunday River is working with Robert Trent Jones Jr. to schedule a date when he can get up to Maine to be the guest of honor for



Harris Golf has commenced construction at Sunday River Golf Club, which promises to offer views of the surrounding mountains.

a ceremony. At press time, they were shooting for the late-May to mid-June timeframe.

Boothbay Harbor-based Harris Golf, which owns and operates two other courses in Maine, is

handling construction of the course, which began within a

Continued on page 13

Waynesborough CC changing its turf

Disease-resistant bentgrass to help club combat anthracnose

By JOE DEVANNEY

WAYNESBOROUGH, Pa. — Perhaps as much as any other area of the country, a strong sense of history permeates Philadelphia and its surrounding counties. Particularly in the "Main Line" western suburbs of the city, sites dating to the Revolutionary War and earlier are treasured and preserved.

One of these sites is Waynesborough, now a museum, but once the home of Revolutionary War hero "Mad" Anthony Wayne. Just a short distance from this historical house is the Waynesborough Country Club, whose land was once part of the Wayne estate. The club is now in the middle of renovations, which are both forward-looking and, appropriately for the area, firmly rooted in past tradition.

Waynesborough CC, which was founded in 1965, opened its first clubhouse in 1968. During the last 35 years, several expansions have occurred and membership has grown to 707 individuals and families, all of whom will be without a course for a while during planned renovations.

The course will close for a year on Aug. 1 so the fairways can be stripped and re-seeded as a disease-fighting measure, according to general manager Ray Kondziela.

"Our intent is to replace our present grass with a new and more disease-resistant grass. Specifically, we have had a problem with anthracnose, a disease that has affected many of the fairways in the northeast part of the country," Kondziela said. "We believe

Continued on next page



This summer, Waynesboro CC will replace turf on its fairways to help fight disease.

Inverness to showcase renovation

TOLEDO, Ohio — At the end of June, Inverness Club here will host the Senior U.S. Open, giving the golf world a chance to see the result of Arthur Hills' renovation work. Completed last summer,

Hills' designs called for improving most of the tee boxes, moving or repairing fairway bunkers, removing some trees and improving drainage.

Using old photographs in

Continued on page 13



Among the renovation work by Arthur Hills were these new bunkers, located on the 18th hole at Inverness Club in Toledo.

Smyers giving Woods' home course a 'massive facelift'

WINDEMERE, Fla. — Architect Steve Smyers is undertaking the renovation of Isleworth Golf and Country Club here. If, for some reason, he should decide he needs a player's input on the project, he won't have far to look. Isleworth is the home course of Tiger Woods, Mark O'Meara, John Cook and a number of other PGA Tour players.

Smyers said he is taking "a whole fresh look" at the onetime citrus grove that became the cornerstone of a golf community in 1986.

Smyers said he is not intimidated by the proximity of so many PGA Tour players.

"Whenever and wherever we build, we design so whoever plays it will become a better player,"

Continued on next page

Changes coming at Waynesboro CC

Continued from previous page

that the expense of fighting it is prohibitive compared to the replacement expense since the disease seems to adopt to various remedies and rotational cycles are constantly required."

Waynesborough's new grass will be a variety of A4 bentgrass that Kondziela said has been developed for just this purpose.

"This is a new strain that has been engineered to fight the disease. It can be cut low for a pure roll. Many clubs have tried new

'We believe that the expense of fighting [anthracnose] is prohibitive compared to the replacement expense.'

— Ray Kondziela

mixtures, but each club has a different soil base," he said. "Waynesborough has modified its soil system by pulling our topsoil out and replacing it."

Waynesborough turned to Tom Fazio for consulting on re-grassing questions on the project.

"Tom actually worked here as a crew chief in 1964 and 1965," Kondziela said.

And the new turf is not the only change coming to Waynesborough CC. On April 1, the clubhouse was demolished in order to build a replacement facility.

"We want our new clubhouse to evoke the feel of an original Chester County farmhouse. This is a traditional look that we hope will suggest continuity of generations," Kondziela said. "After all, this club is a family and we want our members to consider it as a home away from home."

While the exact costs of the project are confidential, Kondziela is willing to acknowledge that the construction will carry a multimillion-dollar price tag.

Kondziela stressed that the changes at Waynesborough are not intended to draw new members, but to serve those the club already has.

"Our intent is only to meet the desires of our present members," he said.

Current members shouldn't have to worry about finding a place to play during the re-grassing, Kondziela said. While the course is closed for renovation, Waynesboro CC has made arrangements with 30 other clubs in the area to accommodate displaced members. ■

Smyers retooling Woods' home course

Continued from previous page

Smyers said. "We focus on keeping everyone, across the board, in mind. But we emphasize challenging their shot-making ability and stimulating their thought process."

The project is a major undertaking in more ways than one, Smyers said.

"This is a massive facelift not only aesthetically but from a shot-making perspective," he said.

This is Smyers' second renovation at Isleworth, which will reopen in November. Ten years ago, he redid all 18 greens and surrounds and converted the putting surfaces from bentgrass

to bermudagrass.

This time around, he will focus mainly on the turfgrass and irrigation system. Crews from 2002 Golf Course News Large Builder of the Year Quality Grassing & Services Inc. of Lithia will convert the course's existing bermudagrass putting surfaces from Tifdwarf to Tifeagle, and the fairways, tees and surrounds from Tifway 2 to 419

bermudagrass.

In addition, Smyers will also add strategic fairway bunkers and lengthen the course by rebuilding 14 greens and re-contouring fairways.

As part of the renovation project, Isleworth is adding a 10,000-square-foot extension to its clubhouse and improving its maintenance complex.

— Derek Rice

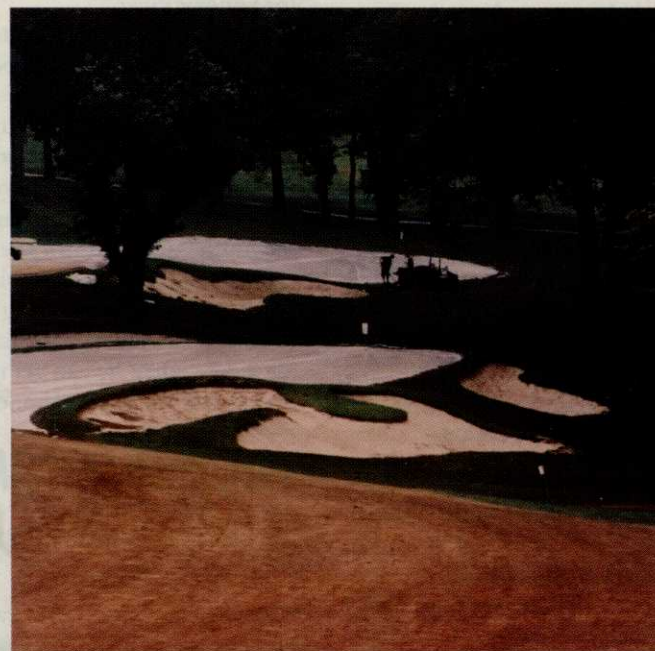
RENOVATION HIGHLIGHT

A Look Back in Time

Those who have tackled golf course renovation projects know how there can be some surprises. There are always situations that can wreak havoc, but a few can bring a positive outcome.

In 2001, Philadelphia Country Club underwent a major transformation of its storied course. During the renovations, which included much needed tree work and fumigating the fairways and greens, a number of old aerial photographs were found. The photographs were taken during the late 1920's and show much of the course in its original design.

The old photos showed very large, dramatic bunker complexes which did not reflect their



present state. Course Superintendent, Mike McNulty was quite surprised. "We knew the bunkers had been grassed-in several decades ago. But the old photos showed that our current bunkers were roughly two-thirds the size," McNulty said.

With the new information, the staff investigated several bunkers with soil probes to find the old edges. "When we pulled off the grass and dirt, we realized we had the potential to bring this course back to its original grandeur" he added. Mike further determined that much of the grassing had occurred to minimize bunker maintenance and costs.



Course at Sunday River on fast track

Continued from page 11

week of the April 11 official closing the land deal. The course, which Harris will own and operate, is scheduled to open in summer 2004.

The stone-and-log clubhouse will be built using native lumber from the Maine woods. Details are

still being finalized, but the finished product is intended to be a reflection of the natural surroundings at Sunday River.

While the construction plan is ambitious, Duplessis said she did not foresee any delays in opening the course as scheduled.

Golf Course News will continue to follow the development of the course at Sunday River in future issues. ■

Hills' Inverness work on display at Open

Continued from page 11

some cases, Hills restored several greens that had been softened by years of wear and tear.

On the 18th hole, Hills replaced a right-side fairway bunker with three smaller pot bunkers to put more of a premium on shot placement. The remaining fairway bunkers on 18 were repaired and had their bottoms leveled to correct

shifting that had occurred over the years.

Hills added additional yardage to four holes, the 8th, 9th, 14th and 17th.

With the Senior Open in mind, space was cleared around a number of greens to make room for spectator stands that will be erected this month.

— Derek Rice

The First Tee reports financial success

Continued from page 1

stated last fall at its annual meeting (GCN, Dec. 2002). At that time, executive director Joe Louis Barrow said the organization was well on its way to achieving its goal of reaching 500,000 people by the end of 2005. The primary objectives for 2002 were to introduce 60,000 youths to golf, open 40 dedicated facilities and establish 75 affiliate relationships. While the number of facilities was lower than anticipated (30), The First Tee far exceeded the other two goals, reaching 100,000 youths and establishing 109 affiliate relationships. This year, according to the report, the organization hopes to reach 90,000 youths, open 45 facilities and es-



The First Tee honorary chairman, former president George Bush, recently helped celebrate the organization's 100th facility, in Richmond, Va.

establish 100 affiliate relationships.

As for total distributions in 2002, The First Tee received and distributed 22,000 pairs of Nike golf shoes, 20,000 dozen range balls, 8,000 dozen playing balls, 6,000 junior golf gloves, 3,700 sets of The First Tee clubs, 80 computers for database and facility management and more than 3,000 donations of miscellaneous supplies. The First Tee distributed more than \$1.4 million in grants to its facilities as well.

The First Tee also recently celebrated the opening of its 100th facility, The First Tee at Elson Redmond Memorial Driving Range, in Richmond, Va. Former President George Bush, honorary chairman of The First Tee, attended the opening and praised the organization.

"I am extremely pleased and proud to be involved with a program that has such a positive impact on the youth in our society," Bush said. "There was no way anyone could have known in 1997 that The First Tee would take hold the way it has, and the fact that this program consistently impacts the lives of 100,000 young people each year is a remarkable achievement."

In May alone, The First Tee opened facilities in Los Angeles, Sarasota, Fla., and central Florida, and announced The First Tee of Dallas. Several new initiatives are on tap for The First Tee in 2003, including the introduction of The First Tee University, launching a new Web-based communication solution and creating The First Tee chapter Web sites. ■

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McNulty had the opportunity to install Sandtrapper, an advanced polymer designed specifically for lining bunkers. "With so many of the newly redefined bunkers having dramatic shapes and flashing, we had to identify a solution." Along with new drainage systems, they installed Sandtrapper on the severe slopes to complete the bunker renovation on 9 of their 27 holes.

We followed up with Mike to see how well Sandtrapper worked on his new bunkers.

"This product has worked exceptionally well. We've had several big storms recently that washed out a number of bunkers without Sandtrapper." When asked how this product aided in his renovation, he replied, "We're going to install Sandtrapper on another 9 holes this year."



As we finished our discussion, we realized that the old photographs produced a nice surprise for Philadelphia Country Club. Mike closed by adding "Bringing back the drama and grandeur of such a place has really been satisfying."

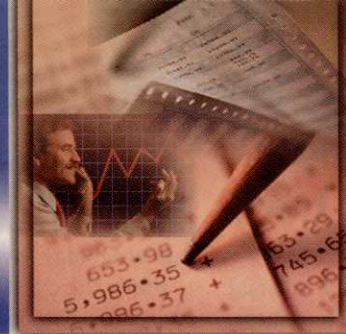
For those who are contemplating renovation, we're familiar with the common saying among Superintendents – "It's supposed to be a hazard". Mike discovered how to renovate bunkers so they stayed hazards for the golfers and not his maintenance budget.

If you're planning some projects this year, make the bunkers a priority. Hundreds have already done it.

To find out more about Sandtrapper, call IVI-GOLF at 888-970-5111 or visit the website at www.sandtrapper.com.



MANAGEMENT



BRIEFS

HERITAGE GETS \$44 MILLION IN REFINANCING

RED BANK, N.J. — GMAC Commercial Mortgage (GMACCM), recently provided \$44 million in interim refinancing for San Diego, Calif.-based Heritage Golf Group. The financing was for three unnamed golf courses, one in California and two in Georgia. The GMACCM Golf Finance Group based in Washington, D.C., arranged the transaction, which follows on the heels of GMACCM's foray into the golf industry by providing \$650 million in financing for the acquisition of National Golf Properties' 253 golf courses earlier this year (GCN, May 2003).

LEGENDS GROUP INSTALLS UPLINK SYSTEMS

AUSTIN, Texas — UpLink Corp. has installed its SmartCourse Profit Generating System at Legends Resorts Group's Moorland, Heathland and Parkland golf courses in Myrtle Beach, S.C. Larry Woodberry, golf operations director for the Legends Group, said UpLink's global positioning-satellite-based management system will allow the courses to realize significant savings by not having to print yardage books. Through UpLink's relationship with on-car scoring and live leaderboard capabilities provider Vision Perfect, Legends will also be able to increase its tournament bookings, Woodberry said.

LIGHTHOUSE SIGNS AGREEMENT FOR SOMERSET GC

ATLANTA — Lighthouse Golf Group has signed an agreement with Somerset Education Foundation to provide complete management solutions for Somerset Golf Club in Locust Grove, Va. The course, originally built in 1996, is in the midst of a renovation of its greens, tees, bunkers and several complete holes. Architect Rick Robbins of Robbins & Associates Inc. of Cary, N.C., is overseeing the renovation being completed by Links Construction of Palm City, Fla.

OB Sports rebounds from mistaken identity

By DEREK RICE

SCOTTSDALE, Ariz. — In the last two years, OB Sports Golf Management has experienced incredible growth in the number of properties it manages, jumping from five contracts at the beginning of 2001 to 14 at press time. According to C.A. Roberts, OB Sports' vice president of business development, this growth is the best of any in the company's more than 30 years in business.

"We've achieved our most success ever that I could point to in the history of the company just in the last year and a half, which is weird," Roberts said.

While that would be cause for celebration at any company, it is particularly sweet for OB Sports, which has had to deal with a case of mistaken identity in recent years.

In the mid-1990s, OB Sports managed two courses in the Las Vegas area, Angel Park and The Legacy. The owners of those two courses approached OB Sports founder and CEO Orrin Vincent

and proposed forming a new company to build and buy more golf courses. The result was OB Sports LLC, which existed from 1995 to 2000. During that time, the company bought several golf courses

and built others, all the while picking up management contracts along the way, Roberts said.

"We had a nice portfolio of 16 golf courses," he said.

Continued on page 16



OB Sports recently opened The Duke at Rancho El Dorado, one of 14 courses the company manages.

Elcot draws on team's diverse background

By DEREK RICE

NASHVILLE, Tenn. — Norm Carl, who raised the equity to develop Legends Club of Tennessee for Tom Kite and Bob Cupp's Legend Golf Development Co., has teamed with partners Rick Chukas and Joe Kennedy to form Elcot Golf Inc., a full-service golf management and consulting company.

The three principals come from diverse backgrounds. After raising financing for Legends Club, Carl continued to provide management and consulting services for the club. Chukas is a former partner with Arthur Andersen LLP, where he created a practice specialty area dedicated to the golf industry. Kennedy has more than 25 years of turfcare management experience and has been director of golf at Legends Club since it opened in 1990.

The company also hired Steve Nieman as director of corporate sales. Nieman previously worked for Raycom Sports as tournament director of the LPGA's Aerus Electrolux USA Championship hosted

Continued on page 16

Editorial Focus: Golf Cars

Manufacturers tweak current golf car offerings

By DEREK RICE

The 'big three' golf car manufacturers have planned few changes to their main lines for 2003, but that does not mean they are resting on their laurels. Club Car and Yamaha Golf Car (YGC) and E-Z-GO Textron are all bringing new features, services or offerings, designed to make life easier for their customers, to the table.

REFURBISHED CARS

Earlier this year, Club Car, based in Augusta, Ga., made a foray into the used golf car market with its REserve program. Club Car now offers customers previously owned and refurbished golf cars backed by the Club Car brand.

Under the program, Club Car

will take back golf cars coming off lease and send them through



Yamaha has introduced its Genius diagnostic system, which allows courses to configure their golf cars with a Palm Pilot.

a refurbishing process, then sell or lease them to customers at a substantially lower price than a new fleet of cars, said Brian

Crawford, vice president of sales, aftermarket.

"There is a significant amount of demand in the market today for a lower-priced golf car that still offers the assurance of the Club Car brand," Crawford said. "This program helps us address that market with a consistently high-quality product offering that gives our customers great value."

For the most part, the vehicles that go through the program this year will be electric. They will be sent to either Club Car's main plant in Augusta or to its custom manufacturing facility in Indio, Calif., to go through the refurbishment process. Club

Continued on page 17

Nelson relishes GM position at Half Moon Bay

By DOUG SAUNDERS

HALF MOON BAY, Calif. — The role that women play in the game of golf stepped to the forefront last month with Annika Sorenstam's appearance at Colonial Country Club in Texas as she competed with the men in a regular PGA Tour event. Her appearance helped to remind the general public that this game, which has certainly been male-dominated for decades, is one that should be shared by all who want to become involved.

But the revolution of women playing a role in shaping the future of golf has been happening quietly over the last 15 years and it is definitely a growing trend. It was just seven years ago that Judy Bell served as president of the USGA, the first woman to serve in that capacity, and women make up a large seg-



Lyn Nelson

ment of new golfers coming into the game. The trend continues into the front offices of clubs and courses around the country as more women are ascending into managerial positions.

Lyn Nelson, general manager at Half Moon Bay Golf Links, just south of San Francisco, is part of this trend, but certainly is not new to the rigors of the job. Nelson has been working in the management end of the golf industry

Continued on next page

GM enjoys Half Moon Bay opportunity

Continued from previous page

since graduating from San Jose State University in 1982.

"I played collegiate golf at San Jose State with such great players as Patty Sheehan and Julie Inkster. I love playing competitive golf, but I also realized that I didn't have a burning desire to play on the LPGA Tour. While attending school I obtained a degree in marketing and I was fortunate to find a way to blend my love for golf and my education into a career," Nelson explained.

Nelson's first position was as a marketing director for Los Altos Hills Country Club, a private club in Silicon Valley. The development of new private clubs in this affluent region in the '80s led to the need for a marketing effort and Nelson willingly accepted the challenge. She learned to focus on the true assets of her club and market those strengths to prospective members.

During time at Los Altos Hills, Nelson delved into the various facets of the club in order to learn how each functioned. It was through this hands-on approach that she developed an understanding of what was necessary for each department to be successful.

"I approached our head chef to learn about the food service business and he put me to work on weekends so that I could see how things were done. I would spend my time in the kitchen as a prep cook," Nelson said. "I did the same with the bartender, and this experience all helped to give me a better understanding of what is required to make these services a true asset for the club."

Nelson's forays into the kitchen, pro shop, maintenance shop and playing with the membership all contributed to her being appointed as the general manager in 1985.

"I was one of the youngest GMs around and one of the few female GMs in the country then," Nelson said. "But there has been a growing trend of more women coming into management positions nationwide and it is a trend that I think will continue."

Nelson came to Half Moon Bay, which boasts layouts designed by both Arnold Palmer and Arthur Hills, in February of this year after a stint as manager at the University Club in Palo Alto, Calif.

"I was honored when I was appointed to the position here because I feel that this is a unique property that has not reached its full potential. The combination of seaside golf with first class accommodations so near to major population areas is remarkable," Nelson said.

Nelson is responsible for the operation of the golf shop, the restaurant, the marketing of the

golf facility, and with joint purchasing and marketing with the on-site Ritz-Carlton Hotel. This makes the golf complex a daily-fee facility, a destination resort and a homeowners club all in one.

It is a chance for her to put all of her hands-on experience to work, especially in the difficult market the golf industry is in.

"Our challenge is the same that many golf courses face. There are more courses for players to choose from and here in California there are many other recreational choices to compete with. Our effort is to first create a seamless operation in order control costs, and stress service to our guests. I feel that it is important to do the little things so that each person that comes to Half Moon Bay will

walk out with a positive memory of their day," Nelson said.

Nelson said she feels it is important to look at the immediate community in order to grow the value of the course. To that end, she has initiated a \$1 greens fee for junior players after 3 p.m. on weekdays as a way to promote new golfers.

Nelson considers herself a manager first and while she sees different approaches between male

and female managers, she doesn't see any advantage to either.

"Men deal better with the mechanical ends of golf operations while women seem to be more detail-oriented about the finer aspects to the operations," she said. "Both attributes are important. I just continue to work to make my facility the best possible just as any general manager – male or female – would." ■



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Elcot draws on Legends Club experience

Continued from page 14

by singers Vince Gill and Amy Grant, which was held at Legends Club from 2000 to 2002.

Carl said the varied backgrounds of the founders should translate into a unique type of success for Elcot's client base.

"We have assembled a highly skilled team with extensive golf management experience and strong business skills," Carl said. "Our goal is not to become the largest golf and turfcare management company, but to provide a unique perspective on the business of golf and deliver the highest level of client service."

Despite their differing perspectives on the industry, Carl said the team has common goals when it comes to their customers.

"Each of us shares a passion for the game of golf and a deep respect for its history and tradition," he said. "But we also share a similar respect for golf as a business operation."

In addition to full-service management, Elcot will draw on its team's experiences to of-

fer consulting services, including developing golf operations protocols and staffing, business plans, facility planning, sales and marketing, personnel recruitment and placement, and equipment evaluation and sourcing.

As for services, Elcot plans to offer construction management, ongoing maintenance and renovation planning and management.

Despite being a new operation, Elcot finds itself busy. At present, Elcot manages the day-to-day operations for Legends Club and is consulting on renovation and managing golf operations and turfcare maintenance for Orange Lake Resort & Country Club in Orlando, Fla. The company is also consulting on Bear Trace Jack Nicklaus Signature golf courses located throughout Tennessee and providing construction and maintenance consulting for a new 18-hole facility at Fairvue Plantation in Nashville. The group also directed construction of Vinny Lakes First Tee in Nashville and continues to consult on the project. ■

OB Sports bounces back from partnerships, name confusion

Continued from page 14

In 2000, the financial backers of OB Sports LLC decided to get out of the golf business, so OB Sports put together a package to sell the six courses they owned jointly. Heritage Golf Group then offered to infuse OB Sports LLC with some financing and manage those six courses for them. This was when OB Sports' management team decided to separate from OB Sports LLC.

"All of us on the OB Sports management team said, 'We'll separate from you.' So Jan. 1, 2001, we kept our eight management contracts and all of us on the executive team kept the name and logo of OB Sports and moved down to Scottsdale and set up our office here," Roberts said. "So OB Sports Golf Management was our name. They were not to use the name OB Sports in any way, but they didn't want to have to go change all their loan documents they had on those six courses. It would have taken an infinite amount of time, legally."

Confused yet? So was the industry to some extent, Roberts said.

"[OB Sports LLC] filed for reorganization and we had to do some damage control to say, 'We're not them. We have nothing to do with them,'" Roberts said. "But every time they filed for reorganization, OB Sports LLC was in the documents. So even though they didn't market the name, vendors were getting letters that were saying OB Sports LLC was filing for bankruptcy."

Rather than create more confusion by mounting an aggressive marketing campaign, Roberts said OB Sports chose to ride out the storm.

"We decided not to create a press campaign because we might have been dredging up people who might not have otherwise cared. We kind of watched all that unfold," he said. "The good news is that now they've either sold or dumped all of those courses and they no longer exist. They're no longer on the map anymore, so that issue is gone."

Since the beginning of 2002, OB Sports has added nine management contracts, and no longer gets involved in any type of equity deals, Roberts said.

"We've added seven contracts this year. It's a huge growth for us," he said.

At the same time, Roberts said, the company has to be careful about growing too much, which would fly in the face of its management approach.

"We have to be careful about growing too much. Our big hook is our boutique size," Roberts said. "We always tell people we don't want to be Troon or ClubCorp or American Golf. We like the lives we live and the jobs we have here. We don't want to have 3,000 employees in our office. Can we grow to 18 or 20 and be comfortable? Absolutely."

Among the 14 properties OB Sports currently manages are Angel Park and The Legacy, which are particularly sweet, Roberts said.

"It's like a homecoming," he said.

Roberts said OB Sports has two or three additional contracts that could potentially come to fruition in the near future. For now, he said, the company will continue to garner new business through referrals, while being careful not to exceed its capacity. ■

IN A PERFECT WORLD
THERE'D BE NO
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TESCO

'Big three' introduce new technologies, services for 2003

Continued from page 14

Car's refurbishment teams will put the cars through a mechanical inspection of the chassis, suspension, steering, electrical and brake systems to ensure the cars are performing to original factory specifications. They will then replace the body (front and rear), bumpers, scuff guards, bag well protector and access panel.

In addition to this thorough inspection, seats, tires, canopy top, batteries and battery chargers will be tested to make sure they are in good condition and are not damaged or defective.

All cars purchased through the REserve program will be covered by a limited warranty.

In the past, distributors and have sold golf cars coming off lease to secondary courses or individuals. The REserve program was developed to address the slow economy and the need for lower-cost vehicles, Crawford said.

"This is an opportunity for Club Car to provide a solution

to our customers that offers a lower price alternative to new product while maintaining the quality image the industry has come to expect from us," he said.

Club Car has also expanded its relationship with GPS provider UpLink this year. In January, the two announced their first collaborative offering, IQLink (GCN, March 2003), which integrates Club Car's IQ system with UpLink's wireless communication system. The offering allows courses to have full control over golf cars, including setting maximum speeds in certain areas and keeping golf cars out of other areas altogether.

DIAGNOSTICS MADE EASIER

YGC of Newnan, Ga., is sticking with its GMAX line of golf cars this year, but is adding a Palm-based diagnostic system called Genius, according to Chris Wall, national marketing manager for YGC. The company plans to announce the feature at its June 7 distributor meeting.

Using any Palm-based personal digital assistant (PDA), a mechanic, manager or superintendent can change settings on the golf car, including maximum speed and downhill braking power. More importantly, users can download information on number of rounds used and battery life at the touch of a button. Best of all, Wall said, the tools used for these functions are relatively inexpensive and are not proprietary to YGC.

"With this, you can buy a Palm Pilot for \$80 and we supply the software," Wall said.

The Genius system will be sold as an option to YGC customers who wish to use it. Wall said it will save courses both money and time.

"If they've got their own mechanic and they want to diagnose the whole fleet to see how many rounds the whole fleet has gone, he can diagnose the whole fleet very quickly," Wall said. "You're talking about 30 seconds to a minute per car to download the information off the car. Without something like

this, you have to go back to your written records and physically check the charge on the batteries."

Wall promised a major announcement about YGC's golf car line in the near future, but declined to be more specific.

"You'll probably see something new from us on the golf car side within a year but we won't be announcing it at this meeting," he said. "But our guys are feverishly working on something right now."

EXPANDING PERSONAL CAR LINE

E-Z-GO, also based in Augusta, is expanding its offerings in the realm of personal cars, which were introduced at the GCSAA Conference and Show in February. With a current lineup of the 2003 Freedom, Freedom SE and Freedom LE, E-Z-GO has tripled its individual car offerings.

The Freedom is the entry-level model. It includes a four-cup drink holder, center storage basket, low oil and fuel gauges or a state-of-charge meter. It is available in electric or gas configurations as well as the computer-controlled per-

formance configuration Precision Drive System. This model starts at \$5,995.

The Freedom SE is intended for country club members or private neighborhood residents. In addition to the Freedom features, it offers headlights, tail lights and a horn, with a suggested starting price of \$6,255.

The top of the Freedom line is the LE model, which is geared toward customization. It adds a number of paint color options, a wood grain dashboard, aluminum mag wheel tires, turn signals, a top and windshield to the features of the SE model. It starts at \$7,625.

Kim Hegel, marketing manager for the Freedom line, said the customization features of the LE were provided in response to customers' desires to "individualize" their cars.

"Individual golf car buyers are just that - individual," said Kim Hegel, marketing manager for the Freedom product line. "We listened to their varying customization, product feature and price point requests and responded with three golf car models." ■

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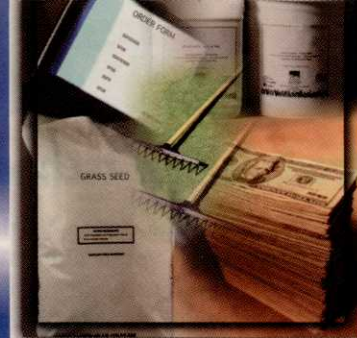
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SUPPLIER BUSINESS



BRIEFS

SPINDLER ENTERPRISES ACQUIRES BIOPRO PRODUCT LINE

LAKELAND, Fla. — Spindler Enterprises has purchased the BioPro line of fertilizers, micronutrients, biostimulants, soil amendments and pond bacteria from TerraBiotics. Company president Jim Spindler has been involved in the management of the BioPro line for more than six years. Spindler Enterprises specializes in the marketing of liquid turf, ornamental and sod growth products, bacteria for improving pond water quality and agronomic consulting services.

JUNK JOINS SEED RESEARCH

CORVALLIS, Ore. — Nancy Junk has joined the Seed Research of Oregon sales staff as a regional sales manager. Based in St. Joseph, Mo., Junk comes to Seed Research with more than two decades of sales experience in the seed industry, having spent the past seven years as director of operations for Forage Genetics International (FGI). Junk started in the seed business in 1980 with Seed Corp. of America, a turfgrass company in Baltimore.

MCDERMID HEADS TO PARKWAY

HOUSTON — Cameron McDermid, a 12-year veteran of the turf chemical and fertilizer industry, has joined the Parkway Research sales team as the central Texas territory manager. According to the company, Cameron is the first of several sales team expansions planned for this year, including southeast Florida and the Hilton Head Island area.

GOWAN NAMES PETERSEN

YUMA, Ariz. — Martin Petersen has joined Gowan Co. as managing director. Petersen will focus on expanding Gowan's international business, working closely with Margarita Internacional. Over his 20-year career in the crop protection business, Petersen has worked for Helena Chemical and Bayer CropScience.

Laskowski returns to Lastec, looks to expand niche

By ANDREW OVERBECK

INDIANAPOLIS, Ind. — Jeff Laskowski has returned as CEO and president of Lastec, a company he co-founded with inventor Dan Tekulve in 1990. The two pioneered the concept of high-end rotary mowing with the introduction of the Articulator and received a patent for the mowing deck's drive system.

In 1998, Laskowski merged the \$5 million company with its parent firm Wood-Mizer, which makes portable saw mills, and then decided to leave and pursue other interests. After his father, Donald Laskowski, stepped down in early April, he decided to come back on board to once again run both companies.

According to Laskowski, he's got his hands full.

"The mower side of the business is profitable, but it has shrunk," he said. "The sawmill

side is in the red for the first two years in a 25-year history. I would say some of it has to do the economy, but they took their eye off the ball and they need some direction."

On the mower side, Laskowski will concentrate on reasserting Lastec's brand in the marketplace and rebuilding its dealer network.

"We created the niche. Nobody had articulated rotary decks before we did," he said. "We used to supply Toro and John Deere with decks and now everyone is in the game with different configurations and different types of drive systems."

"But Lastec presents the greatest opportunity for the corporation," Laskowski continued. "We got into this market in the worst possible economy in the early '90s and we thrived. The economy doesn't matter if you offer a viable solution to a problem that exists at a reasonable price."



Jeff Laskowski plans to reassert the Lastec brand and improve distribution.

Strengthening Lastec's dealer network will be key to the company's success.

"The distribution network has been neglected a bit," Laskowski said. "We have an effective way of powering decks at a reasonable cost. What we haven't done is

build a distributor network to take advantage of what we currently make and we haven't taken that advantage and put it in other niches. We can do four times more volume if we are better at building a distributor network and

Continued on next page

Lesco numbers up, golf sales slip

CLEVELAND — Lesco's first quarter 2003 sales were up 1 percent to \$94.5 million with its lawn care business leading the way with a 4 percent sales gain. Golf sales, however, slipped 9 percent during the period.

Lawn care posted sales of \$77.7 million, up from \$74.7 million in 2002, while golf gross sales were \$17.8 million, down from \$19.6 million in 2002. Lesco officials blamed golf's sales decline on a late spring in the Northeast. Sales in the Northeast were down 40 percent and remained flat elsewhere across the country.

"Golf is having a tough time," said Lesco president and CEO Michael P. DiMino. "Every aspect of golf, not only our business — golf equipment, golf course construction, and rounds — is down. The weather in the Northeast did not help relative to that situation."

Continued on next page

Scotts and Monsanto resubmit RR bent petition

By ANDREW OVERBECK

MARYSVILLE, Ohio — The Scotts Co. and Monsanto resubmitted their petition for Roundup Ready bentgrass to the USDA Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) April 14. The companies originally submitted the petition in May 2002, but withdrew their application Oct. 3 after APHIS issued a "letter of deficiency" in September.

"We have not changed the petition," said John Bosser, senior specialist for environmental com-

munication for Scotts. "We just provided the additional year's worth of data that they asked for."

According to Bosser, the requested data supports the performance of the variety and how it behaves in terms of growing characteristics. Bosser also said that since 1998, some 40 percent of petitions to APHIS have been withdrawn at some point and then subsequently resubmitted and approved by the agency.

No timetable has been set for

APHIS approval or commercialization, but Scotts and Monsanto are moving ahead and plan to harvest their 400-acre test plot in Oregon in July.

"Once they complete their scientific review we will have seed available for commercialization," said Bosser.

As Scotts and Monsanto proceed with their approval process, Bill Rose's HybriGene is currently seeking an APHIS permit to grow its proprietary male-sterile glufosinate resistant creeping bentgrass outside in field trials (GCN March 2003).



Deere & Co. posts 80 percent second quarter gain

MOLINE, Ill. — Deere & Co. announced May 13 a worldwide net income of \$256.9 million for the second quarter ended April 30, an increase of more than 80 percent over last year's second quarter net income of \$141.8 million. For the first six months, net income was \$324.9 million, more than triple last year's six-month net income of \$103.6 million.

Sales volumes were up across all three major equipment divisions. The Commercial and Consumer Equipment Division, which includes the golf and turf business, increased sales by 12 percent. Sales for the first six months increased 19 percent, compared with last year, when the division implemented deep production and ship-

ment cutbacks to reduce company and field inventories.

In other John Deere news, its Golf & Turf One Source division has been named the exclusive supplier of golf course maintenance equipment and financing to Evergreen Alliance Golf Limited (EAGL), a golf course management company servicing more than 40 courses around the country.

Through the agreement, John Deere Golf & Turf One Source will be supplying John Deere golf and turf maintenance equipment to the superintendents of each EAGL course, including all mowing, aeration and specialty turf products. John Deere will also provide exclusive financing to all EAGL courses.

Utility vehicle choices abound

Continued from page 1

Yamaha product lines, the front end of the new vehicles sport an ATV-like flair.

"We are trying to match the family resemblance of Yamaha products, yet keep the identity of the utility vehicle," said product development manager Joel Cheek. "The same people that style our motorcycles and ATVs style golf cars and utility vehicles."

Behind the new look, the vehicle will feature two different suspensions, increased traction and ground clearance, heavy-duty bumpers and improved ergonomics and corrosion resistance.

According to Cheek, YGC's new factory played a large role in the development of the vehicle.

"Before the new factory the G21 was largely hand-assembled," he said. "With the new factory we can build down the line, which gives us flexibility and cuts production costs. The system enables us to build more customized vehicles. The first factory was one size fits all."

E-Z-GO, JACOBSEN REVAMP LINES

Both E-Z-GO and Jacobsen are on the cusp of releasing new utility vehicles as well. On the E-Z-GO side they will be called the MPT 800, 1000 and 1200 (see GCN, Feb. 2003). On the Jacobsen side, they will be called the Hauler 800, 1000 and 1200. The 800 series will come in both electric (36V) and gas versions (9-hp), the 1000 has a 48V motor, and an 11-hp engine powers the 1200. The 1000 and 1200 models will have a polyethylene bed with inserts for tie downs and racks.

Jacobsen will also offer the Hauler 4800 with a 16-hp engine. "The 4800 has a stronger chassis, a locking rear differential, bucket seats, full suspension and high ground clearance," said Jacobsen

product manager Larry Jones.

The new vehicles will be introduced sometime this summer.

GATOR SET FOR REDESIGN

John Deere's current Gator utility vehicle line was introduced in 1992 and is about to see its first major facelift, according to David Thorne, group brand marketing manager for utility vehicles.

"We would like to refresh the

expect more and more from the machine," he said. "The typical customer buys them and then finds more uses for them. The more experience the customer gets with the category, the more they look for attachments and things to help them work more effectively."

KUBOTA TO ENTER THE FRAY

Kubota Tractor Corp. will enter the growing market segment this fall with its first utility vehicle.

"We will release the product at

our dealer meeting in October," said Kubota spokesperson Pat Carroll. "It will have a dump bed and will be powered by a diesel engine because that is what we do best."

Carroll said the vehicle will be geared to both the golf

and commercial markets.

TORO TO ROLL OUT E-WORKMAN

With electric utility vehicles making up an increasing portion of the marketplace, Toro will be adding a mid-duty E-Workman powered by a 48V system early next year.

"I think there is a trend to electric vehicles," said Neil Borenstein, senior marketing manager. "It is our first electric utility vehicle. One of the customer demands is for quiet operation so they don't have to stop for play. The other issue is emissions. We work hard to make sure our products fit our customer's needs, so we are always in touch with customers to make sure we develop the correct products."

CLUB CAR EXTENDS THE 272

One of this spring's new offerings is Club Car's Carryall 272XL, which offers an extended six-foot cargo bed.

"This car builds off the success of the Carryall 472 which had seating capacity for four," said Ben McElmurray, regional sales manager for Club Car. "Customers liked that vehicle but wanted one with two-passenger capacity and a six-foot bed."

The 272 XL is powered by a 400 cc, 13-hp Kawasaki engine and can carry 1,300 pounds. It also offers higher ground clear-

manager Brett Linden. "Our accessories fit on it as well, so it is a good part of our product mix."

The GT642 is powered by a 20-hp Honda engine, offers four-wheel-drive, and can haul 1,400 pounds. The GT422 is a two-wheel-drive vehicle powered by an 18-hp Honda engine.

POLARIS FILLS OUT LINE

Polaris entered the utility vehicle market with a big splash last

year with two high-powered models. Polaris rounded out the model line this year with the introduction of the UTV 1500 2x4 that

is equipped with an 18-hp engine and has a 1,250-pound payload capacity.

Polaris' Tony Wixio feels the 2x4 will be more applicable for golf course use.

"This fills in the low end of the line and takes the price leader point out to golf courses," said Wixio. "It is an economic 2x4 suited toward a golf course application."

Utility vehicles are a hot product category in the golf market as of late. New entrants and new products continue to abound and rumors of new players, such as Honda, entering the market are plentiful. With competition among manufacturers at an all time high, one thing is for sure: superintendents have plenty of utility vehicles to choose from. ■



Lesco's new Ground Tamer GT642 rolled out this spring



Jacobsen's new Hauler 800 is due out later this summer.

Laskowski to lead Lastec

Continued from previous page

supporting it."

Laskowski also plans to push zero-turn mowers (ZTRs) in the golf market.

"Golf doesn't go with ZTRs under the false pretense that they are just yard equipment," he said. "But if we can prove to them they can cut twice as fast and give them better looking turf, I believe we will get that business. Articulation combined with the maneuverability of a ZTR creates another niche."

Lastec already markets the 3377, 3682 and 3696 ZTRs in addition to its original line of out front and pull-behind articulating decks. Laskowski said the company is working on a 72-inch articulating ZTR and a 10-foot wide articulating ZTR to round out the lineup. ■

Lesco's 1Q golf sales drop

Continued from previous page

But the Northeast will come back as it gets warmer."

DiMino said the company is not counting on sales growth in golf in 2003. Expected growth in golf is projected to be less than 2 percent.

The mixed news is on the whole good for Lesco, which sees its lowest sales volume in the first quarter and has historically generated net losses. The company's net loss was \$5.7 million, as compared to the 2002 net loss of \$13.7 million.

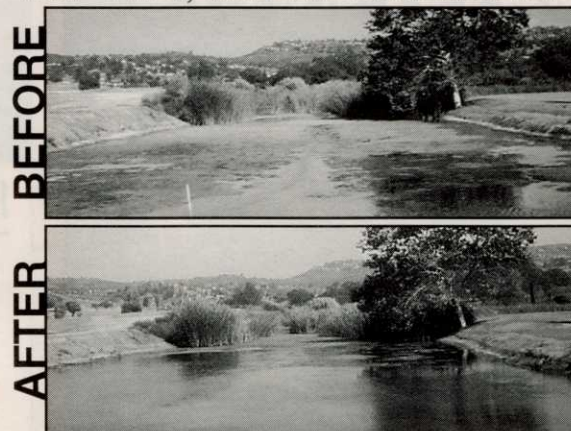
"The first quarter represents 18 percent of total volume from a selling perspective," said DiMino. ■

— Andrew Overbeck

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Glenmac's Harley Model B Hi-Lift is ideal for large capacity stone removal. The maneuverable units can screen items from one half inch to 18 inches in diameter. The Hi-Dump model raises to eight feet high and has a one cubic yard box and the Side Delivery Elevator elevates to 10 feet high. Both are capable of moving one ton per minute. The units require a 35- to 75-hp tractor with PTO drive and a hydraulic system running at 11



The Hi-Lift can move one ton per minute

gpm at 1,500 psi.

For more information, contact 800-437-9799.

Lesco unveils Patriot Series flags

Lesco has introduced a new Patriot Series golf flag allowing courses to show their patriotic spirit during national holidays. Lesco is donating 15 percent of all sales of these flags to the USO.



One of the new Patriot Series flag designs

The flags are available in two designs:

- "United We Stand" is an embroidered flag featuring crossed American flags with an eagle design and is available in a 14-inch by 20-inch size.
- The American flag offers a more

Ditch Witch rolls out mini skidsteer

Ditch Witch is ready with its new SK500 mini skid steer, a compact walk-behind model that is designed for a variety of construction applications. The machine is powered by a 24-hp Honda engine, travels on rubber tracks powered by dual independent hydrostatic ground drives and has lifting capacity in the 500-pound weight class. The SK500 can be configured as a material loader, trencher, augering machine, forklift and



Ditch Witch's SK500 mini skid steer in action.

can be used with more than 40 other attachments available in the marketplace.

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Echo sprayer offers on-the-go precision

Echo's new SHR-210 gas-powered backpack sprayer allows users to apply chemicals over large areas of turf and landscape.

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For more information, contact: 847-540-8400.

traditional approach to patriotism with a screen-printed America flag in both a standard 14-inch by 20-inch and a seven-inch by 10-inch putting green size.

Set-up and design charges have been waived for both flag designs. For more information, contact: 800-321-5325 or www.lesco.com.

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Management companies

Continued from page 1

management contract basis, they become part of this bigger family. Through some of our upgrade programs, they can get access to these other clubs around the country and in Mexico and Australia."

One reason OB Sports, of Scottsdale, Ariz., has been able to succeed in this economy is its longevity in the business, said C.A. Roberts, OB Sports' vice president of business development.

"So many people jumped into golf management in the late '90s because it looked like a sexy little business to be in, and almost all of them are gone," Roberts said.

Roberts said the down times in golf and in the economy might actually have been good for some management companies, including OB Sports.

"To some degree, the hard times have helped our company because it's enabled us to focus on our strength," Roberts said.

Dana Garmany, president of Scottsdale-based Troon Golf, echoed that sentiment.

"The number of people who want to try something on their own is lower than the number of people who want to try something on their own in a prosperous time," Garmany said. "We think we've had clients call us who three years ago may have tried to do it themselves but won't do that today. It's increased the number of things we look at, but we're not doing any more deals than we've done every year."

Garmany said Troon is cautiously optimis-

tic that the industry, particularly the segments that rely on travel and tourism have suffered through the worst part of the downturn and that it may be starting to turn around.

"From what we're hearing from our hotel partners and our real estate partners, people are starting to feel like the worst is over," Garmany said. "They're now starting to see some group bookings in the fall. We're hopeful that that's the right sign."

Garmany said there is nothing like a down economic cycle to force a company to run leaner and meaner than before, which usually ends up improving business practices.

"We think one of the things that an economic cycle does to a company is it makes you get better at what you do," Garmany said. "While we might say that in 1999 we were superb at being efficient, we're probably more efficient today than we were because we found a way to look even deeper and I think that's a classic thing that happens. In prosperous times, businesses aren't operating as efficiently as they could because the economy is good."

ClubCorp has also taken a hard look at its business practices as a result of the slumping economy, Beckert said.

"We realized at some point in the past, we moved from a high-margin to a low-margin business, and that specifically has caused us to really focus on our corporate overhead and trying to operate as efficiently as possible," Beckert said. "We have been able to take some significant overhead expenses out of our organization by just trying to figure out how to do things more efficiently."

Moving forward, Beckert said, ClubCorp, which has almost gone out of its way to avoid management-only contracts, will change that model and add more managed courses to its portfolio.

"We're getting the message out that not only do we want to do it, but we're going to be an aggressive player in that market," he said. "We've made a lot of progress in the last year and we're reasonably confident at this point, that at least our organization has figured out how to ride the ups and downs. We're pretty excited about the future." ■

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NEW ENGLAND (ME, NH, VT, MA, RI, CT)	-55.3%	-63.1%
MIDDLE ATLANTIC (NY, NJ, PA)	-28.9%	-36.8%
EAST NORTH CENTRAL (MI, OH, IN, IL, WI)	-13.2%	-18.0%
WEST NORTH CENTRAL (MN, IA, MO, KS, NE, SD, ND)	43.8%	36.1%
SOUTH ATLANTIC (DE, WV, VA, MD, NC, SC, GA, FL)	-6.5%	-4.8%
EAST SOUTH CENTRAL (KY, TN, AL, MS)	16.4%	4.9%
WEST SOUTH CENTRAL (AR, LA, OK, TX)	11.1%	-1.9%
MOUNTAIN (MT, ID, WY, CO, NM, AZ, UT, NV)	7.9%	10.6%
PACIFIC (WA, OR, CA, AK, HI)	1.1%	3.6%

* The percentages above represent the difference in number of rounds played in the month of March 2002 from the number of rounds played in March 2003.

Source: Golf Datatech

Golf Course News STOCK REPORT (5/13)

Company(Symbol)	Price	Change(%) 4/7/03	52-wk range
BASF (BF)	41.91	0.9	31.22 - 46.85
Bayer AG (BAY)	19.33	26.1	10.80 - 33.47
Central Garden and Pet (CENT)	23.01	-1.4	12.00 - 25.30
Deere & Co. (DE)	44.18	7.1	37.50 - 51.60
Dow Chemical Co.(DOW)	31.99	10.5	24.10 - 34.73
Golf Trust of America (GTA)	2.40	0.0	0.88 - 3.90
Ingersoll-Rand (IR)	43.65	6.3	29.69 - 54.40
Lesco Inc. (LSCO)	11.56	11.7	9.95 - 14.60
Monsanto Co. (MON)	18.93	17.6	13.20 - 31.45
Syngenta AG (SYT)	10.37	5.5	8.50 - 12.97
Textron Inc. (TXT)	29.80	-10.1	26.00 - 53.60
Toll Brothers (TOL)	26.07	29.3	17.63 - 31.55
Toro Co. (TTC)	37.09	1.9	23.15 - 38.35

CURRENT U.S. GOLF PROJECT ACTIVITY (CHANGE FROM 2002)

	NEW	ADDITIONS	TOTAL
PROPOSED	334 (-48)	63 (-3)	397 (-51)
IN PLANNING	394 (-21)	70 (-13)	464 (-34)
UNDER CONSTRUCTION	342 (-101)	159 (-40)	501 (-141)
COMPLETED	35 (+5)	14 (-2)	49 (+3)

Source: NGF

Renovation numbers

The National Golf Foundation's monthly Golf Project Report numbers do not include courses classified as reconstructions or renovations. At present, 64 renovated/reconstructed courses are under construction, and seven renovated/reconstructed courses have opened this year.



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Enwood Structures	21	800-777-8648	919-469-2536	www.enwood.com / mikee@enwood.com
Excel Bridge Mfg.	21	562-944-0701	562-944-4025	www.excelbridge.com / excelbridg@gte.net
Fore Par	3	714-842-8494	714-842-7384	www.forepar.com / michaelneal@earthlink.net
Formost Construction Co.	21	909-698-7270	909-698-6170	formost@inland.net
Georgia Pine Straw	21	800-944-4753	—	www.georgiapinestraw.com
Harrington/Harco Corporation	21	434-845-7094	434-845-8562	www.harcofittings.com / sales @harcofittings.com
Irrigation Technical Services	21	724-935-2339	724-935-8233	—
LESCO	15	440-782-4390	440-783-4383	www.lesco.com
Monsanto	5	314-694-1000	—	www.monsanto.com
Patten Seed	7	800-634-1672	770-463-3039	www.pattenseed.com
Precision Small Engine	21	800-345-1960	954-973-8032	www.precisionusa.com / andym@precisionusa.com
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Quail Valley Farms	21	800-666-0007	501-975-6286	www.quailvalley.com
Sandboss	20	87-SandBoss	850-574-2675	www.sandboss.net
Sandtrapper by IVI-GOLF*	12-13	888-970-5111	607-729-5158	www.sandtrapper.com / info@sandtrapper.com
Seaisle I Growers Association*	12-13	888-584-6598	706-227-7159	www.seaisle1.com / gsd@negia.net
Seaisle 2000 Growers Association*	12-13	888-584-6598	706-227-7159	www.seaisle2000.com / gsd@negia.net
Seepage Control	21	480-763-1180	480-763-1182	www.seepagecontrol.com
Spectrum Technologies, Inc.	21	800-436-4440	815-436-4460	www.specmeters.com
Stop & Go	21	800-747-0238	815-455-9210	www.stopngo.com
Tee-2-Green	24	503-651-2130	503-651-2351	tee-2-green.com
TifEagle Growers Association*	12-13	888-584-6598	706-227-7159	www.tifeagle.com / gsd@negia.net
TifSport Growers Association*	12-13	888-584-6598	706-227-7159	www.tifsport.com / gsd@negia.net
Turbo Technologies	21	800-822-3437	724-846-3470	www.turboturf.com / sales@turboturf.com
Turf Feeding Systems	7	800-728-4504	713-849-9047	turffeed@aol.com
Turflite	20	636-441-8588	636-441-8180	www.truesurface.com
U.S. Chemical	21	828-264-6198	828-264-5228	www.uschemicalstorage.com

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