

John Deere extends PGA Tour deals

MOLINE, Ill. — Deere & Co. announced Feb. 10 that it reached an agreement with the PGA Tour to extend its title sponsorship of the John Deere Classic by an additional four years. It will now be involved with the tournament, which is held each year at Tournament Players Club (TPC) Deere Run in Silvis, Ill., through 2010.

Additionally, Deere has expanded its licensing agreement with the PGA Tour, extending its designation as the official golf course equipment supplier through 2014. The PGA Tour also added John Deere Credit as the official



golf course equipment leasing company and John Deere Landscapes as the official landscape product supplier.

Since 1998, Deere's designation as official golf course equipment supplier of the PGA Tour has placed John Deere equipment on all Tour-owned TPC courses.

Audubon: 'Golf industry can be a leader'

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Alabama and Florida. The organization has set up the Earth Fund to help finance the new program and has partnered with North Carolina State University to extend the reach of the campaign.

The idea for the program stems from the organization's experiences in certifying Eufaula, Ala.,

as the first-ever Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary Community. The superintendent at the city's course jump-started the program and got Audubon involved. The organization is now working with the city to create a master plan to take social and environmental issues into account when considering new development.

While Audubon is counting on the golf industry to support its new initiative, Dodson realizes that the organization is going to have to enroll more than two percent of the courses in the U.S. as Audubon Certified Sanctuaries. This is where the organization's plan to enroll 50 percent of U.S. courses in its environmental programs within the next five years comes into play.

"The golf course industry can play a pivotal leadership role as a catalyst for a whole new way of thinking about sustainable community development. We need the golf industry's participation," said Dodson.

During the industry summit at Catechee, Dodson and director of programs Kevin Fletcher asked for help in identifying things that would help grow golf's participation.

Feedback ranged from simple fixes to more broad-scale efforts. Attendees suggested that Audubon work more with general managers and owners to drum up support for the program. Another suggested getting golfers to care about the environment would be the key to driving the program forward. Another asked, why not try and get a PGA Tour event on an Audubon-certified course? Others said the multiple levels of Audubon certification needed to be clarified and simplified.

Audubon's Fletcher said the group is working on increasing financial incentives for courses to join the program. "We are working with an insurance company to give discounts and with companies like, say, Toro to give a two percent discount to Audubon courses," he said.

Mike Young, who designed Catechee, said Audubon offers more than environmental or financial benefits. "I see value beyond the environment," he said. "I see more benefits politically. As a new developer, Audubon takes you a long way with planning commissions."

As the summit wrapped up, it was clear to everyone that more work needed to be done, but that the discussion had been a good starting point.

"We have a long way to go," said Dodson, "but we have also come a long way." ■

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1 My primary title is: (check one only)

- A. Golf Course Superintendent
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- C. Director of Golf/Head Pro
- D. Club President
- E. General Manager
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- G. Builder/Developer
- H. Architect/Engineer
- I. Research Professional
- Z. Others allied to field: (please specify) _____

2 My primary business is: (check one only)

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- 22. Private Golf Course
- 23. Semi-Private Golf Course
- 24. Municipal/County/State/Military Golf Course
- 25. Hotel/Resort Course
- 26. Par 3/Executive Course
- 27. Practice Facility
- 29. Other Golf Course (please specify) _____
- 30. Golf Course Management Company
- 31. Golf Course Architect
- 32. Golf Course Developer
- 33. Golf Course Builder
- 39. Supplier/Sales Rep
- 99. Other (please specify) _____

3 Number of holes:

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

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- 1. Recommend equipment for purchase
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