

## Industry News



A recent study reveals the concern about the decline of the number of golfers and rounds played.

### Survey: golfers, water are issues

Chicago – The 2005 Golf Industry Outlook Survey conducted by Foley & Lardner LLP reveals industry leaders are concerned about the declining number of golfers and rounds played, as well as a lack of player retention, despite a positive growth forecast of course development.

Findings show 95 percent of industry leaders are concerned about the declining number of golfers. When asked to rank the top issues most likely to impact their business in 2005, 71 percent of respondents cited the declining number of rounds, and 68 percent indicated player retention.

Seventy-seven percent of respondents selected water management as the predominant environmental issue impacting the industry. More than half of respondents have been forced to make sizable investments in their irrigation systems, install drought-resistant grass and/or investigate reclaimed water options.

The majority of respondents are missing profit opportunities by failing to maximizing tax incentives. This year, only about one in five respondents plan to use conservation easements, and one half plan to take advantage of the depreciation of their greens and tees. These figures highlight an opportunity to educate the industry about methods to leverage tax laws.

Most industry leaders foresee a 13-percent increase in the development of golf courses during the next five years. Respondents also are optimistic that course development will continue to expand at a higher rate during the next 10 years.

Course owners are using marketing to help retain existing players and attract new golfers. They're increasing advertising and promotional budgets, creating player-development and customer-loyalty programs, enhancing the customer-service experience and lowering fees. Additionally, more than 70 percent of respondents plan to target women, and 33 percent are directing their efforts at minorities in 2005.

The survey was given to 669 golf course architects, developers, general managers, directors of golf, financiers and other industry professionals, and yielded 80 responses. Additional survey findings are available at [www.foley.com/golf](http://www.foley.com/golf).

### Winterkill research group formed

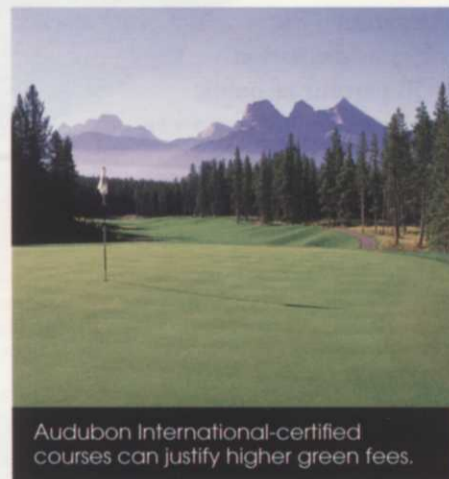
Bourne, Mass. – A group of golf course superintendents in the Northeast, in conjunction with turf specialists from the University of Massachusetts, began a multi-year research project looking at winterkill. During the study, the group will try to identify specific factors leading to winter-related turfgrass injury, determine best management practices in autumn for preventing winterkill and evaluate the effectiveness of various greens covers.

"Traditionally, winterkill is something we'd experience to some degree every few years, but during the winters of 2001, 2003 and 2004, the problem was widespread, and many courses got hammered," says Tedesco Country Club superintendent Peter Hasak, who's spearheading the project. "So a bunch of us got together and decided that we needed a specific course of action to figure things out."

Winterkill can be caused by many problems, including turfgrass fungi, ice damage, desiccation and direct low-temperature kill. The ability to correlate weather events with turfgrass injury will be an important aspect of the study, according to Mary Owen, one of the participating UMass turf specialists.

### Study: golfers OK with paying more for 'green' courses

Anderson, S.C. – Golfers are willing to pay more to play golf at courses certified as environmentally friendly, according to research conducted by Anderson College finance and economics associate professor Peter C. Melvin, along with Frank Limehouse and Robert E. McCormick of Clemson University. Courses certified by



Audubon International-certified courses can justify higher green fees.

Audubon International raised rates more than noncertified courses between 1995 and 2002, according to Melvin.

The research was conducted to determine the significance of environmental golf and how much golfers are willing to pay to play where the environment and wildlife are protected. There are costs to golf courses to become environmentally certified, but analysis shows the benefits outweigh the costs.

The study shows that on the national level, the demand for golf is elastic or sensitive, meaning golfers are responsive to changes in the price of golf. An elastic demand for golf means the average golf course can raise revenues when it decreases green fees because the increase of golf rounds will offset the loss in pricing.

### Experts address superintendents

Canfield, Ohio – Almost 100 golf course superintendents from Pennsylvania and Ohio attended Bayer Environmental Science's Conference at the Border in January.

Hosted by Jerry Cox, superintendent at Tippecanoe Country Club, the conference featured an educational program and gave superintendents the opportunity to earn professional educational credits and state certification. The group heard the latest research findings from university experts.

Penn State plant pathologist Wakar Uddin warned anthracnose is a growing concern in the Mid-Atlantic region.

"This is usually a disease of stressed turf, but recently it's attacking vigorous turf," Uddin says. "It's becoming more aggressive and more virulent."

Karl Danneberger, Ohio State turfgrass specialist, stressed the basics: proper water management, good air movement across greens and managing organic matter accumulation.

"Small things impact turf growth," he says. "You can have all the money you want in your budget, but without good agronomic practices, you will lose your greens. Money will cover up poor management for a while, but the problems will catch up to you."

Penn State turfgrass specialist Thomas Watschke advised superintendents to suppress *Poa annua* seedheads on annual bluegrass as a best management practice. He says to keep suppression goals reasonable. Even 50 percent suppression means



50 percent better playability, and anything in the 50-percent to 80-percent range should be considered good.

Ohio State entomologist Harry Niemczyk says the reason for almost every instance of unsatisfactory pest control is that the control agent didn't reach the target.

"There's no evidence there's resistance buildup to the compounds we have," he says.

Rather, Niemczyk says the likely causes for problems are poor timing of application, equipment difficulties causing rate or distribution problems, improper watering of material, or material getting tied up in thatch and not reaching its target.

## Golf clubs using handicap system must be licensed

Far Hills, N.J. – All golf clubs using the USGA Handicap System are required to be licensed by the United States Golf Association by Jan. 1, 2006 to continue to provide a USGA Handicap Index.

"By adopting this licensing policy, we are trying to accomplish several things," says Jim Vernon, chairman of the USGA Handicap Committee. First, we want to ensure the integrity of the USGA Handicap System by promoting uniform and consistent usage of it. Second, we want to demonstrate to golfers the value in having a bona fide USGA Handicap Index compared with others that aren't. Finally, we hope to promote increased knowledge of the system among club officials, who will, in turn, be able to provide enhanced service to golfers at the grass-roots level."

The licensing process requires clubs to provide information demonstrating their full compliance with the USGA Handicap System. Such compliance will include meeting the definition of a golf club and satisfactorily completing a checklist furnished by the USGA.

## Seabreeze GT performs well in salt trial

Hubbard, Ore. – One of Turf-Seed's slender creeping fescue varieties, Seabreeze GT, demonstrated the best survival rate among commercial varieties in a three-month study in which the varieties were exposed to salt levels of 10,000 ppm of



Seabreeze GT performed best in a study about salt tolerance.

NaCl for 12 weeks. Pure-Seed Testing conducted the study.

Seabreeze GT ranked as the top performer and had a survival rate of 99.3 percent after 12 weeks of being in the salt bath. After collecting data through the 10th week, Seabreeze GT had yet to show any signs of damage from the salty environment.

Seabreeze GT originally was bred for its natural tolerance to the nonselective herbicide glyphosate. It also has an endophyte content of 12 percent.

For more information about the variety, visit [www.turf-seed.com](http://www.turf-seed.com).

## Association news

### Environmental Institute elects officers, trustees

Lawrence, Kan. – The Environmental Institute for Golf elected officers and welcomed three new members to its board of trustees during its winter meeting at the 2005 Golf Course Superintendents Association of America Education Conference and Golf Industry Show. Michael J. Hurdzan, Ph.D., of Hurdzan/Fry Golf Course Design, was elected chairman. Bill Kubly, owner and c.e.o. of Landscapes Unlimited, was elected vice chairman/treasurer. GCSAA secretary/treasurer Ricky D. Heine, CGCS, was added to the board of trustees and will serve a three-year term as secretary of the institute.

Environmental Institute for Golf

ESPN/ABC broadcaster Roger Twibell and Nike Golf president Bob Wood also were added as trustees and will each serve three-year terms.

Chuck Yash, a consultant for the golf industry, and Mark J. Woodward, CGCS, GCSAA immediate past president, re-

tired from the board of trustees. Tom Chisholm, retired vice president of Eaton Corp. and past chairman of the USGA Green Section, will serve on the board for one year as immediate past chairman.

## \$167,000 raised at silent auction

Orlando, Fla. – The Golf Industry Show silent auction – conducted by The Environmental Institute for Golf, the National Golf Course Owners Association Foundation and the American Society of Golf Course Architects – generated \$167,000 for environmental programs including research, education and player development programs. A total of 109 companies donated 160 items. A complete listing of donating companies can be found at [www.eifg.org](http://www.eifg.org).



Additionally, Mike Grilley, golf course superintendent at The Links Golf Club in Post Falls, Idaho, won an all-expense paid trip to the 2006 GCSAA Education Conference and Golf Industry Show in New Orleans. His name was chosen from a list of those who participated in the silent auction.

## Project EverGreen debuts at GIS

Orlando, Fla. – Project EverGreen debuted at the Golf Industry Show by presenting a message relevant to the industry: Well-maintained green spaces provide economic, lifestyle and environmental benefits to consumers.

Project EverGreen is a nonprofit alliance of green industry professionals in all facets of the business. The group has been endorsed financially by the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America since its inception in 2003.

Project EverGreen is trying to expand its presence in the golf course industry. Further discussions are planned with the Golf Course Builders Association of America, American Society of Golf Course Architects and Professional Caddies of America.



Fund-raising goals for 2005 include \$1.1 million in cash and donated services for a trade and consumer media campaign.



## GCSAA unveils search engine

Lawrence, Kan. – The Golf Course Superintendents Association of America launched the latest version of its new search engine designed for the golf course management industry. Fore! was unveiled at the 2005 GCSAA Education Conference and Golf Industry Show. Available through GCSAA Online

as an exclusive member service, Fore! works by searching and indexing only Web sites designated by GCSAA administrators. It provides users only qualified results and then organizes the results into specific categories. For each category, users will have access to the top results, along with a link to view all of the results in that category.

The search engine has six categories:

- GCSAA – results from gcsaa.org and other GCSAA online properties;
- Publications/media – results from the association's monthly magazine, other publications and other golf industry-related Web sites;
- Chapters – results from 104 GCSAA affiliated chapter and student chapter Web sites;
- Universities/organizations – results from the National Golf Course Owners Association, the United States Golf Association, universities and dozens of other related groups;
- Regulatory/compliance – results from government Web sites or independently operated sites that provide regulatory and compliance information; and
- Industry – results from GCSAA 2005 Golf Industry Show exhibitor Web sites. Beginning in August 2005, the search will be revised to include the Web sites of all GCSAA affiliate member companies.

## Oregon group receives award

Orlando, Fla. – The Golf Course Superintendents Association of America board of directors selected the Oregon Golf Course Superintendents Association for its 2005 President's Award for Environmental Stewardship.

Rod Nelson, president of the OGCSA and superintendent at Camas Meadows



Golf Course, received the award at the Golf Industry Show.

The President's Award for Environmental Stewardship was established in 1991 to recognize an exceptional environmental contribution to the game of golf.

Regulatory standards and public expectations increasingly demand protection of the environment from pesticide applications. In response to these concerns, the OGCSA developed a document to provide golf course superintendents with a working model to implement standardized best management practices, an integrated pest management plan and a water quality monitoring plan. For more information, visit [www.ogcsa.org](http://www.ogcsa.org).

## Course news

### Course in El Paso being developed

El Paso, Texas – Tom Fazio was in El Paso for the groundbreaking ceremony of the El Paso International Airport Golf Course project in February. The project is part of the first phase of the development of El Paso's first resort hotel.



The El Paso International Airport Golf Course is in development.

“Integrated within a planned 150-acre industrial park, this new addition will function to complement the largest, most modern Air Cargo Center on the U.S./Mexico border,” says Patrick T. Abeln, director of aviation.

The 18-hole golf course will merge the beauty of the desert with modern golf course design. The golf course is part of an overall plan to support the airport's growing air cargo industry, as well as associated industrial and commercial uses.

### Course in Florida under construction

Lakeland, Fla. – A meshing of a 7,300-



Steve Smyers is helping develop the Bridgewater Golf Club in Florida.

yard golf course and 260 acres of lakes and wetlands will be the hallmark of the Steve Smyers-designed Bridgewater Golf Club, which is under construction. The 600-acre Bridgewater property will contain 800 houses around five lakes.

Crucial to the project, which is being built by Phillips Development of Raleigh, N.C., is the restoration of 32 acres of distressed wetlands on the property. The development will turn an overgrown marsh into a water-cleansing and wildlife-enhancing habitat, as well as make earth available to design movement on the course and build up areas of the flat property.

John G. Walton Construction of Mobile, Ala., started rough-shaping the course March 1, and Smyers expects it to be grassed in August and open in January.

Smyers and Walton will create a 165-acre wildlife corridor, including 64 acres of upland native plantings of trees and grasses. The remainder will be lowlands and wetlands.

### Course to open in North Carolina

Raleigh, N.C. – Fred Ward, project manager for Atlanta-based Bluegreen Golf, selected NewCourse Golf of Carthage, N.C., to be the general contractor for golf course construction of the Chapel Ridge Golf Club in Pittsboro, N.C. The course will be the centerpiece for an 800-unit housing community. Work began in September 2004, and the scheduled completion date is July 2005. The architect for the 7,100-yard layout is Robert Moore of JMP Design Group.

“Throughout the bidding and negotiation process NewCourse Golf displayed a great understanding of our needs and budget limitations,” Ward says. “They provided us with many construction



alternatives, all of which will allow us stretch our dollars and still achieve the high-quality finished product that is our trademark."

For further information about the course, visit [www.chapelridgeinfo.com](http://www.chapelridgeinfo.com).

## Coco Beach course opens

Rio Grande, Puerto Rico – Coco Beach Golf & Country Club opened in March. Tom Kite, PGA Tour professional and co-architect of the 36-hole championship course, assisted the Diaz family and others in a ribbon cutting ceremony and officially opened the golf resort.

The 36-holes at Coco Beach were designed as four different nines (the Mountain Course, the Ocean Course, the Lakes Course and the Palms Course) to provide golfers with four different experiences within one golf resort.

Guest fees for 18 holes are \$130 and include: green and car fees, a divot repair tool, a ball marker and tees.

The facility includes a 36-hole Kite/Besse-designed layout with a practice facility and a 46,000-square-foot ocean-front clubhouse.

## L'Auberge, Fazio developing new course

Lake Charles, La. – L'Auberge du Lac Hotel & Casino, a \$365-million Texas Hill Country-themed resort currently under construction, teamed up with golf architect Tom Fazio to bring a championship golf course to Southwest Louisiana.

Contraband Bayou Golf Club's course will complement the marsh lowland features of the natural Louisiana environment to enhance the 7,000-yard, par-71 championship golf course. A combination of aquatic and natural vegetation on the edges of eight lakes will challenge golfers.

The Contraband Bayou Golf Club will include a driving range, and each hole will have four sets of tee boxes to provide a challenge for all skill levels.

L'Auberge will sit on 227 acres of land and is scheduled to open this month. For more information about the course, visit [www.ldlcasino.com](http://www.ldlcasino.com).

## Kaanapali course gets makeover

Maui, Hawaii – Kaanapali Golf Courses – a USGA-selected site for U.S. Open Local and Sectional Qualifiers for 2005 – is renovating its Resort South Course and clubhouse that will include a new irrigation installation, regrassing of greens and tee boxes and renovations to the bunkers and landscaped areas surrounding the course.

Robin Nelson, who has designed or redesigned more than 30 courses on the



The Kaanapali Golf Courses' Resort South Course is being renovated.

Photo: Kaanapali Golf Courses

Hawaiian Islands, will oversee the enhancements to the original Arthur Jack Snyder-designed layout. The Resort South Course closed April 1 and is expected to reopen Nov. 15.

In addition to the on-course improvements, the Kaanapali clubhouse interior will be redesigned with an a new retail look, including built-in shelves and storefront displays, and the spacious practice range and teaching facility will be revamped to include new target greens and new turf within the tee line.

Nelson has been hired to modernize to the 6,555-yard, par-71 Resort South Course, which opened in 1976.

## ClubCorp to renovate three courses

Dallas – ClubCorp plans to invest more than \$3 million in capital improvements to three of its Dallas-area clubs, including Gleneagles Country Club in Plano, Las Colinas Country Club in Irving

and Shady Valley Golf Club in Arlington.

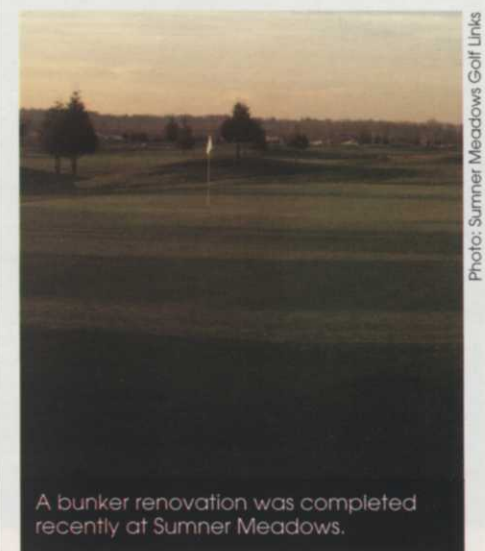
The investments are part of the company's **CLUBCORP™** \$60 million in capital renovations, expansions and improvements for 2004. It plans to spend \$68 million in 2005 improving its clubs and resorts.

Improvements at Gleneagles Country Club and Las Colinas Country Club include complete golf course renovations. The \$1.5-million project at Gleneagles includes a complete renovation to its Queen's Course with rebuilt bunkers and the addition of new 419 Bermudagrass fairways and L93/Crenshaw bentgrass greens. At Las Colinas, the \$1.5-million project includes resurfaced greens, rebuilt bunkers with the addition of white sand, a new irrigation system around the greens and new cart paths. Shady Valley Golf Club spent more than \$300,000 renovating, refurbishing and improving its clubhouse.

## Renovation completed at Sumner Meadows

Sumner, Wash. – A major bunker renovation project at Sumner Meadows Golf Links was completed recently. Thirty-five bunkers at the William Horn/John Harbottle III-designed layout were completely revamped, including removal of the existing sand, reshaping of interiors and faces, installation of new drainage and refilling with new, high-quality sand. Kip Kalbrener of Ridge Top Construction performed the bunker work. New benches, ball washers and tee signs also were installed.

Additionally, Billy Casper Golf will



A bunker renovation was completed recently at Sumner Meadows.

Photo: Sumner Meadows Golf Links



oversee the construction of a new clubhouse and the implementation of new player development programs and group lessons for women, beginners and juniors on the course's spacious, all-weather practice range.

Open since 1995, Sumner Meadows Golf Links is a 6,765-yard, 18-hole layout.

## Emerald Greens establishes course in North Carolina

Tampa, Fla. – Emerald Greens at Carrollwood, developers of Emerald Greens Golf and Country Club, established a new ownership group, Longleaf Florida, and purchased a private 18-hole golf course and its facilities formerly known as The Club at Longleaf in Southern Pines, N.C. The country club features practice facilities, tennis courts, a pool with pool house and a 13,000-square-foot club-

house. Members of Emerald Greens are able to enjoy reciprocal playing privileges with Longleaf Golf & Country Club ([www.longleaf.com](http://www.longleaf.com)).

Additionally, Dan Maples Golf Course Design is working on the renovation of the golf courses at Emerald Greens Golf & Country Club ([www.emeraldgreens-gcc.com](http://www.emeraldgreens-gcc.com)). Currently, the Cypress course is under major reconstruction and will re-open in August. The Meadow course was the first of the 27-holes to be renovated and opened in September 2004.

## Puakea earns certification from NGCOA

Lihue, Kauai, Hawaii – Puakea Golf Course's Robin Nelson-designed layout received a "Beginner Friendly Certification" from the National Golf Course Owners Association. AOL founder Steve Case owns the 18-hole facility.

Puakea was selected from more than 6,000 NGCOA-member courses throughout the United States and Canada. Courses were evaluated on a number of criteria including availability of clinics, loaner clubs, special playing times for beginners and other initiatives. All courses receiving beginner-friendly certification are listed on a national Web site, [www.getlinkedplaygolf.com](http://www.getlinkedplaygolf.com).

## Billy Casper Golf adds to portfolio

Middlefield, Conn. – Lyman Farms chose Billy Casper Golf to manage Lyman Orchards' 36-hole golf facility. BCG will provide management services at the multicourse property including clubhouse operations, course maintenance, financial management, merchandising, oversight of food and beverage, staffing and training, and marketing and public relations.

Lyman Orchards, set on an 1,100-

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acre farm, houses two regulation length courses designed by Gary Player and Robert Trent Jones Sr.

Billy Casper Golf, which has a portfolio of 52 properties, also was selected to manage the 27-hole Village Golf Club in

Panorama Village, Texas. BCG's plans at The Village Golf Club call for rebuilding nine greens on the Winged Foot Course and regrassing the putting surfaces with Miniverde, a new variety of Bermudagrass. Also, there are plans to remodel the

banquet hall and kitchen, create a separate golfer lounge area, bring on new course equipment and a cart fleet, structure a new membership pricing plan and undertake other course conditioning and facility beautification programs.

## Personnel news

**Jim MacDonald**, retired golf course superintendent at New Haven Country Club, was named the Connecticut Golf Course Superintendents Association superintendent of the year.

**Tom Harrington** is the new superintendent at Marshfield (Mass.) Country Club.

**Tom Stone** is the new superintendent at Indian Pond Country Club in Kingston, Mass.

Golf Course Managers Association of Cape Cod members **Joe Felicetti**, superintendent at Pinehills Golf Club, and **Jim Small II**, superintendent at Olde Scotland Links, became certified golf course superintendents designated by the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America.

**Blake Garrett** is the new superintendent at Farm Links in Sylacauga, Ala.

**Jim Fitzroy**, superintendent at Presidents Golf Course in Quincy, Mass., was elected to the board of directors of the GCSAA. Fitzroy also was president of the New England branch of the association.

**Alan D. Hess**, CGCS, a 25-year member of the GCSAA, was named president of the Lonestar GCSA for 2005, succeeding Jamie Kizer of Austin, Texas. Hess is a member of South Texas GCSA and a member of the British and International Greenskeepers Association. Also, Hess is the director of course management for Golf Partners Management, and serves as the superintendent of Augusta Pines Golf Club in Spring, Texas.

**Cory Nelson** was named superintendent at Lakeview Golf Course in Ralston, Neb.

**Kathi Driggs** was named c.o.o. of the Club Managers Association of America. GCN

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