

delivered in person.

Jones says the EPA will review any comments submitted and decide how to proceed from there. An official response will be released. If the ruling stands, registration would be canceled on all organic arsenicals studied. There would then be a period for any who disagree to request a hearing. This is the expected course of action.

"The EPA considered submitted human health and environmental fate data as well as available open literature in its reregistration eligibility decision," Jones says. "Based on available data, the EPA is unlikely to change its conclusions. If previously unsubmitted data were to become available, the EPA would evaluate these data and potentially revise its decision as appropriate."

To read the EPA's report on MSMA and other organic arsenicals, visit [www.epa.gov/oppsrrd1/reregistration/methanearsonic\\_acid](http://www.epa.gov/oppsrrd1/reregistration/methanearsonic_acid). GCN

## Tweaking the Tour

### Agronomy department adds two positions

by John Walsh

**T**he PGA Tour is tweaking the structure of its agronomy department to strengthen it.

Heading the department is Cal Roth, vice president of agronomy, who took over for Jon Scott, who left the PGA Tour to work with Nicklaus Design as chief agronomist.

"We're fine tuning the operations of the agronomy department, which Jon left in great shape," Roth says. "My transition has been smooth thanks to Jon and the quality and experience of the existing staff."

After an evaluation, it was decided the agronomy department needed to add two positions: a PGA Tour agronomist,

which has been filled by Bland Cooper, who came from ValleyCrest Golf Course Maintenance, and a director of agronomy, which the Tour is in the process of filling.

"What that does is structure the department so we have a director of agronomy for the TPC clubs and one for competitions," says Roth, who's been with the PGA Tour for 23 years.

There are two divisions within the agronomy department: one for competitions and another for the TPC clubs. Regional director Collier Miller will take over as director of agronomy and golf course maintenance operations for the TPC clubs, filling the vacant spot created when Roth left it to fill Scott's position,

(continued on page 49)





AN INNOVATION IN CHEMISTRY AND FARMING



TOP Organic Fertilizer

*Organic Growing Systems proudly presents TOP Organic Fertilizer.*

---

Our unique organic chemical manufacturing process takes all the Nitrogen indigenous to raw poultry litter and controls it by making the Nitrogen water insoluble, non-burning and non-polluting. The resulting fertilizer is sterile and replete with micro nutrition: Iron, Sulfur, Calcium, Magnesium, Manganese, Phosphorus, Copper, Sodium, and Chloride. These are all the elements necessary to provide optimum soil and plant health while requiring far less water.

CONTACT US

713-523-4396

OR VISIT US ONLINE

[www.organicgrowingsystems.com](http://www.organicgrowingsystems.com)

## Staying afloat

(continued from page 30)

"This time next year we'll know how good a destination golf course we'll be and if we're as good as the hype," he says.

Business is a little different for those courses that have been around for a number of years. In Texas, The Tribute, which opened in 2000, started to recover from the effects of Sept. 11 in 2003. It has experienced a steady increase in the number of rounds and green fees since 2003, according to general manager Jeff Kindred.

Kindred says he can't reveal the exact numbers, citing the policy of American Golf, which manages the facility. This year, the facility is on track to generate 40,000 rounds. In 2005, it generated less than that.

The Tribute is in the high end of the market, which includes six other courses in a 40-mile radius.

Kindred says being a stand-alone course isn't a hindrance for business.

"In a lot of ways, being a stand-alone course is a positive because the golfers that come here don't want houses lining the course," he says. "This gives us a unique feel. Golfers like the fact that they feel like they're out of town. Because we sit out on a peninsula, you have that destination feel, like you're getting away from the daily grind."

Residential homes are five miles away from the course, but because the ground is part of Army Corps of Engineers' land, homes won't be built on the course.

The Tribute draws golfers from Texas and out of the state. Most guests are local businessmen and about 30 percent of rounds are charity and corporate events. A lot of people

call wanting to try the facility, referencing the course's Golf Digest Top 100 ranking.

Business is also aided by the fact the clubhouse hosts weddings – more than 100 a year. And corporate meetings tie into its customer base.

The facility offers amenities a hotel can't, such as allowing those attending meetings to putt on the practice green or use the driving range during breaks. There also are eight guest suites that are part of the stay-and-play package offered by the facility. The suites are appointed with antique Scottish furniture.

### Alone no more

For those stand-alone courses that have been struggling, owners have been looking at ways to make them more profitable, mainly adding real estate components as sources of revenue. Steele says owners are getting creative and selling parcels of land around stand-alone golf courses, building homes throughout the course.

"People are doing this to add revenue," he says. "I've even heard of re-routing some holes to include some houses."

In Catossa, Okla., the Cherokee Hills Golf Club, once called Indian Hills and Spunky Creek, was struggling because it had no real estate or municipality to underwrite it, Davis says. The Perry Maxwell design that was redesigned by Davis used to be a stand-alone course, but a Native American tribe bought it and built a casino and hotel on the property.

"We'll see stand-alones that will be redesigned or redeveloped so the golf course serves as an amenity to the primary revenue source," Davis says. GCN



A hotel and casino were added to Cherokee Hills Golf Club because it was struggling as a stand-alone course. Photo: Tripp Davis and Associates

## news analysis

(continued from page 13)

and Collier's position will be filled by a TPC agronomist by the end of the year, according to Roth.

Within the structure, there are six agronomists reporting to the director position that has yet to be filled – and most likely will be filled by someone outside the PGA Tour – and two regional agronomists reporting to Collier. All 10 agronomists overlap and work together.

"What this will do is allow for the appropriate agronomic support for each tournament as well as the operational and agronomic support for PGA Tour golf course properties. This also frees up time for me to be at headquarters as needed," Roth says.

As the vice president of agronomy, Roth will work closely with the staff of each of the three tours the organization operates and the staff for golf course properties.

The new structure also frees up Roth to look at future sites for TPC facilities and their development. Currently, the PGA

Tour is developing a new golf course in Naples, Fla. – the TPC at Treviso Bay, which is scheduled to open late next year. There's another TPC course on the drawing board – a 36-hole resort property in San Antonio, although ground hasn't broken yet. There are also other sites for possible development of TPC clubs. In addition to continuing to directly support certain PGA Tour events, Roth also will be available to inspect future possible tournament sites.

Cooper, the newest PGA agronomist, says he wasn't looking to leave ValleyCrest, but an opportunity came about that he couldn't pass up because he always wanted to work with the PGA Tour. He started Sept. 5.

"I'm at an age when if I'm going to make a move, now is the time to do it," he says. "The only job I would have left ValleyCrest for is the PGA Tour. The guys at ValleyCrest are a class act. I made great friendships while at ValleyCrest. I feel bad for leaving. I wish the timing could have been a little better, but there's no one to blame but me. They'll find someone sharper and forget about

Bland Cooper. It was a tougher decision than you might think."

Cooper sees himself spending the rest of his career with the Tour.

"It's the insanity of tournament golf that's attractive to me," he says. "Tournament golf is almost like a drug. I always liked preparing a course for a tournament. It's the finality of a tournament – we have a deadline. It has to be right before the tournament. There's a satisfaction I get out of that."

Tournament preparation is one thing Cooper didn't experience at ValleyCrest. He says that's not necessarily bad, but it was a void he needed to fill.

As a director of agronomy with ValleyCrest, Cooper traveled 180 days a year. He will travel about the same amount with the Tour.

Cooper says he doesn't know exactly how many golf courses he'll visit throughout the year because the Tour is always adding and moving events, but each agronomist is involved with 12 to 16 events, so he'll visit at least that many courses. GCN



Roth



Cooper