

NEWS OF THE INDUSTRY

Athletic division moves

The general sales offices for the **Athletic Products Division** of General Tire & Rubber Company has been moved. New address is: Chambers Ave., Jeannette, Pa. 15644. Telephone: (412) 523-5441 or 526-3501.

Manufacturers concerned over PGA equipment testing committee

Several equipment manufacturers are disturbed by the **Professional Golfers' Assn.**'s recent announcement of an equipment testing committee to "investigate the many claims made in advertising golf equipment..." The announcement, which appeared in the June issue of the PGA publication, "Professional Golfer," stated: "The time has come when advertising and wild claims will be investigated and the PGA golf professional will be advised accordingly."

During discussion of what originally had been termed by PGA President Leo Fraser as a "research and development department" at the PGA's annual meeting last January, manufacturers were told that it would primarily serve as a means of communication to professionals by informing them impartially of any new developments in materials or components for golf equipment, one manufacturer recalled.

"It was not to act as the conscience of the manufacturers, which is the impression created by the announcement," he said. A major question which arises, this industry leader added, is how the PGA can ethically and justifiably assume the task of testing and evaluating various manufacturers' products when it lends its name to many competing products on the market. He pointed out that this could "put the PGA in the position of prosecuting attorney, judge and jury when evaluating competing lines."

Furthermore, the testing and evaluation which the PGA wants to conduct require costly and highly complex equipment and people with a great deal of technical knowledge. "The PGA has neither the facilities nor the qualified personnel to properly carry out such

Spalding testing new ball; performance termed "unique"

A.G. Spalding & Bros. has high hopes for its new Top-Flite golf ball, which is claimed to have unique performance characteristics. One of the ball's major selling points is that it is highly durable. However, a Spalding spokesman says two other features have been discovered in tests: 1) at lower clubhead speeds, golfers could hit the Top-Flite farther than other balls tested against it and 2) the Top-Flite went up to 12 yards farther with a five iron.

These characteristics are attributed to its two-piece construction consisting of a molded core of a high density polymer compound and a cover of DuPont Surlyn—a highly resilient substance. The ball continues to reveal advantageous characteristics in tests and the company has not yet fully evaluated all the features of the Top-Flite, according to the Spalding spokesman.

Surlyn is not new to the golf ball field. Ram Golf Corp. has been using it for their ball coverings for about three years. However, Ram utilizes the conventional three-piece construction—1-1/16-inch center, rubber windings and cover. Meanwhile, other major manufacturers currently are working on golf balls with Surlyn covers.

This marks Spalding's second attempt with a two-piece ball. The "Executive I," a two-piece ball of entirely different materials, had been on the market for about two years. However, it was withdrawn due to a certain "softness" which golfers found undesirable.

Currently, the Spalding Top-Flite is being test marketed in West Coast pro shops at \$1.25. However, Spalding plans to test market it in Florida this fall at \$1.35. It has already gone through USGA tests and was found to be within the association's requirements for initial velocity. The Top-Flite will be sold in pro shops only and is expected to be introduced to the public nationally in January 1971.



LEO FRASER

functions," the spokesman said.

In questioning the actual functions of the new group the Manufacturers' PGA Relations Committee has been assured by Fraser that the original concept as explained last January, had not been altered.

PGA Executive Director Robert Creasey told GOLFDOM that nothing is absolutely definite right now in regard to the committee and that the article announcing it was merely to inform members of one of the association's "determinations" to explore new areas.

However, it seems the manufacturers' concerns have not been sufficiently allayed, and the new committee is likely to be a top subject of discussion during the upcoming annual meeting.

Golf featured at River Oaks

Golf will be the focal point of a new recreational \$250 million facility located on Grand Island which lies in the Niagara River between the United States and Canada. To prove it Erie County Executive B. John Tutuska whacked a three-wood shot 230 yards to "break ground" on the spot where the first tee will be located.

The development, to be called **River Oaks**, will include a hotel, marina, park, high rise housing, single houses and a retail shopping center. Loeb, Rhoades and Company in partnership with Caldwell Development Corp. will build River Oaks on 1,100 acres. The architects for the course will be Victor Gruen Associates.

An end to waste

Wastewater recycling can be one of man's most important weapons in his battle to improve the environment, according to Dr. **Robert C. Ball** director of Michigan State University's Institute of Water Research.

"As we become increasingly aware of the degradation of our environment, there is an urgent need to reorient our thinking to regard as resources many things we now wantonly discard as wastes," says Ball.

Ball believes that man must direct his technology toward recycling these supposed wastes into economically valuable and useful products, and "perhaps there is no place that recycling of resources has greater application and potential than in wastewater treatment." Such treated water can be used to irrigate not only agricultural and forest crops, but golf courses as well. In fact one such system already exists at Panther Valley CC in Allamuchy, N.J. (see **GOLFDOM**, June, 1969, p. 45).

Recycling is not a panacea for wastewater disposal problems nor is it a new concept. But it "is a concept we have chosen to ignore largely because we have had access to what appeared to be limitless new raw materials and ample land and water areas upon which to impose our wastes. We are now recognizing the hazards in this approach.

"Unless we redirect our technology to reuse our wastes, we run the grave risk of destroying important sectors of our environment as well as depleting our resource base," Ball adds.

Melnor moving into institutional irrigation field

Preliminary negotiations are under way for acquisition of **Turf Irrigation Corp.**, manufacturer of institutional irrigation equipment, by **Melnor Industries**, a manufacturer of home sprinkler systems to merge.

According to Edwin M. Heiberger, president of Turf Irrigation, and Norman Seiden, president of Melnor, Melnor will purchase Turf Irrigation cash assets for approximately \$2 per share of Turf Irrigation stock. Turf Irrigation will then operate as a division of Melnor with Heiberger remaining president and general manager.

Venable branches out

Venable Sprinkler Sales, a division of Michigan General Corp. plans to open offices in Atlanta, Miami, Oklahoma City and in Waco, Austin and San Antonio, Tex., as a further step toward becoming a nationwide contractor, supplier and installer of sprinkler systems.

Heading the Atlanta-Miami operation, which opened recently, is David Wilcox, recently-appointed Southeastern sales manager. Wilcox has worked in the irrigation and turf business for over 12 years.

The other four branch offices are scheduled to open in early 1971.

Sales earnings decline for Victor and Stauffer

Unfavorable economic conditions have resulted in a marked downturn in sales and earnings from 1969 to 1970 for both Victor Comptometer Corp., parent company of Victor Golf, and Stauffer Chemical Company.

According to A.C. Buehler, chairman of Victor Comptometer Corp., net sales for the six months ending June 30 are down by \$1,095,695 from \$78,380,552 in 1969 to \$77,284,857 in 1970. In addition, net earnings for 1970 were only \$2,614,122 as compared to \$5,027,333 in the same 1969 period. Second quarter net sales showed a decrease of \$3,458,778 from 1969 to 1970, whereas net earnings dropped by \$1,934,328 in 1970.

Stauffer Chemical Company suffered similar losses. Sales for the first half of 1970 were \$250.2 million compared to \$262.6 million for the same period in 1969. This represents a drop of \$12.4 million. In the second quarter of 1970, sales dropped by \$8.6 million from \$132.5 million in 1969 to \$123.9 million in 1970.

Stauffer's net earnings also show reductions. Earnings for the first half of 1970 were \$17.2 million, (Continued on page 64)

Dutch elm disease: a possible solution

The solution to the **Dutch elm disease** problem, which has plagued the United States for nearly 40 years (see **GOLFDOM**, August, 1969, p. 38), may be within sight.

Foresters at Michigan State University and the University of Wisconsin have found that certain European elms are resistant to the disease; in fact, it is now possible to give a 75 per cent guarantee that some types of elms will survive the disease for 40 years, according to MSU forestry researchers Gary Long and Jonathan W. Wright.

Over 600 seedlots of elms from Japan, India, Rumania, Russia, Austria and other European and Asian countries were received by the researchers by the end of the summer of 1968. These seeds were planted as soon as they arrived. Now two years old, the trees were inoculated with spores of the Dutch elm disease fungus early this June. In total, 25,000 trees were inoculated. First results showed that one European species, the smooth-leaved elm, showed high resistance. A Japanese species also showed considerable resistance.

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News

(Continued from page 63)
whereas in 1969 earnings totaled \$18.1 million. In the second quarter earnings dropped by \$225,000 from \$9.1 million in 1969 to \$8.9 million in 1970.

Although Stauffer Chemical is making no predictions, Victor Comptometer anticipates an upturn in both sales and earnings for the latter part of the year.

Turfmen compare data

Representatives from 15 universities met in a joint meeting of the **Southern Regional Turf Research Committee** and the **Northeast Co-ordinating Committee-3** at Virginia Polytechnic Institute July 8 and 9. The committees met to hear the results of the bluegrass tests being conducted in Virginia as reported by Dr. John F. Shoulders, turf specialist.

These federally-supported committees are testing 40 varieties of bluegrass for ecological and physiological performance in addition to researching new pesticides and methods of turf weed and disease control.

Because Virginia is a member of both committees, a joint meeting was held.

ASGCA elects officers

The American Society of Golf Course Architects elected officers at its annual Board of Governors meeting. Elected president was E. Lawrence Packard, LaGrange, Ill. C. E. Robinson, Toronto, Canada, was elected vice president and Francis J. Duane, Port Washington, N.Y., was elected secretary-treasurer. In addition Percy Clifford, Mexico City, was elected to the board.

The A.S.G.C.A. established headquarters in the tour suite of the LaSalle-Wacker Building, 221 North LaSalle Street, Chicago.

Still serving three-year terms on the board are Geoffrey S. Cornish, Amherst, Mass.; Robert M. Graves, Lafayette, Calif.; David W. Gordon, Doylestown, Pa.; James G. Harrison, Turtle Creek, Pa.; and Ferdinand Garbin, Ex- port, Pa.

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