

Off The Fringe

NEWS WITH A HOOK

Business briefs

IGM makes deal with World Woods

Lakeland, Fla.-based International Golf Maintenance reached a multi-year, multi-million dollar agreement with World Woods Corp. to provide maintenance services at its three courses. Brooksville, Fla.-based World Woods includes Pine Barrens, Rolling Oaks and the Short Course.

IGM also announced an agreement to oversee maintenance operations at Champions Golf Links in Sacramento, Calif.

Scotts reports record sales

Marysville, Ohio-based The Scotts Co. reported record net sales of \$1.65 billion for the fiscal year ended Sept. 30, an increase of 48 percent over last year's actual sales of \$1.11 billion and an increase of 11 percent on a pro forma basis. The pro forma figures include the results of recently acquired international and U.S. pesticides businesses as if Scotts had owned them throughout both periods.

For fiscal 1999, net income was \$63.2 million, or \$2.27 diluted earnings per share including a previously reported one-time benefit of 28 cents per share related to the timing of the Ortho acquisition.

In other company news, Scotts is expanding its technical services organization to provide customers with more resources for support, the company said.

Resource One born

Memphis, Tenn.-based Resource One is the name of a new marketing division of Cenex/Land O'Lakes Agronomy Co. that combines Terra Professional Products with Land O'Lakes East Turf & Ornamental Products. This follows the acquisition of Terra Distribution by Cenex/Land O'Lakes Agronomy Co. last summer.

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License to Kill Raccoons?

REAL-LIFE HUNT ON GOLF COURSE

MIRRORS REEL-LIFE GOPHER PROBE

FROM 'CADDYSHACK' THANKFULLY,

NO ONE WAS HURT.

By James E. Guyette

The silver screen spirit of superintendent Carl Spackler lives on at a golf course in Hinckley, Ohio, where a real-life gun battle with rascally raccoons is drawing comparisons to Spackler's reel-life confrontations with galling gophers in the film "Caddyshack."

"They're like the Viet Cong . . . Varmint Cong," said Bill Murray's fictional character in the famous and funny 1980 flick.

"So . . . you've got to fall back on superior firepower and superior intelligence."

"Caddyshack" aside, Hinckley homeowners surrounding the Pine Hills GC are up in arms following a late-night raccoon hunt at the course. When the black-masked critters took to the fairways for evening grubs, the Pine Hills staff opted for a high-caliber control strategy — but a shot in the dark that went wide now threatens to blow up in club officials' faces. At presstime, the local police department, county prosecutor's office and the Ohio Division of Wildlife were all reviewing the case. While it's legal to discharge firearms in Hinckley, the near tragedy sparked concern.



Spackler lives?

ORION PICTURES

Twice in a month, police were called to the club to investigate shots fired, and during the second incident, investigators recovered a 1-ounce slug from a 12-gauge shotgun that shattered the window of a \$500,000 neighboring house. With a luxury home bordering a golf course, owner Jeff Radin says he expects a few golf balls to come hooking into the backyard — but it was a large piece of ammunition that nearly hit his wife and children who were relaxing inside, he said.

There are 80 to 100 houses near Pine Hills, and homeowner Thomas Yatsko said this type of unfriendly fire is more at home on the frozen tundra. "These are polar bear slugs. I don't know why they were using the weaponry they were using," he said.

Yatsko and Radin expressed concern the hunters were untrained marksmen and were firing weapons at night while using only flashlights to guide them.

"Who knows what they were blasting at?" Yatsko added. "They weren't real careful."

Pine Hills' reluctance to address these concerns remains a powder keg among newly re-acquainted neighbors, who are now trading tidbits of information. There could be future attempts at obtaining legislative relief through the township's government, neighbors said.

"This is a classic case of what *not* to do if you have a problem with a neighbor," Radin said of Pine Hills' response. "The lack of remorse is like throwing gasoline on a fire."

Meanwhile, club staffers declined to

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Pernicious Plague

A FOREIGN VISITOR SPREADS LIKE A WILDFIRE
THROUGH CALIFORNIA'S EUCALYPTUS TREES

By Frank H. Andorka Jr.

The Australian Redgum Lerp Psyllid has descended upon California, and its destruction has been felt on golf courses across the state.

Scientists aren't sure how it arrived in the United States — it certainly didn't book an airline ticket — but the pest that defoliates Redgum eucalyptus trees and renders them open to other diseases has certainly wreaked havoc in only a year.

"It has spread quickly," said Dr. Lester C. Young, an entomologist for California State Polytechnic University in Pomona, Calif. "I can't say how quickly it's going to spread across the United States, but

where there are eucalyptus trees, there's a chance this bug will attack them."

"All you can do is sit back and watch it happen," said Kent Davidson, superintendent of Industry Hills GC in Industry Hills, Calif. "There's nothing we can do. I feel very helpless."



The nasty Redgum Lerp Psyllid

Davidson said there are hundreds of thousands of eucalyptus trees on the 300-acre property that was built in 1978. If the Redgum Lerp Psyllid destroys the trees, he'll have to replant with different species.

"As the weather cools, the lerp seems to be slowing down some," Davidson said. "We're hoping that as it slows down, a natural predator might come along to help us out."

At press time, the Redgum Lerp Psyllid, which first destroyed the Redgum eucalyptus trees, has now spread to at least six other species, all related to the Redgum, Young said. When the Lerp Psyllid sucks the sap out of the eucalyptus leaves, the leaves fall off, depriving the trees of nourishment and weakening their immune systems.

Young said he has conducted some experiments with a new pesticide called Imicide from J.J. Mauget Co. in Arcadia, Calif. The pesticide is micro-injected into the base of the tree and moves through the tree's vascular system to the leaves. When the Redgum Lerp Psyllid drinks the sap out of the leaves, it takes a swig of pesticide with it, and eventually dies. Young said the micro-injection system can last for four months.

Other tips for those battling these bugs:

- Minimize stress to infected trees.
- Provide supplemental water to trees during summer or droughts.
- Be careful not to irrigate too close to the trunk of the trees.
- Irrigate no more than once per month.
- Avoid fertilizer because the Redgum Lerp Psyllid prefers the young growth stimulated by the application of fast-release fertilizers.

Quotable

"I will always remember that smile and that laugh and that beautiful, graceful swing. It's hard to believe we're not going to watch that effortless swing anymore."

— Ben Crenshaw on the tragic death of Payne Stewart.

"..."

— The reaction of a golf clinic crowd to an insensitive joke by Fuzzy Zoeller (*oh no, not again!*) about JFK Jr. dying in an airplane crash. We hope Zoeller was wearing his spearmint shoes after putting his foot in his mouth — again.

"Running a golf course is a life; it's not a job."

— Alan Puckett, superintendent of Lake Region Yacht & CC in Winter Haven, Fla.

"The image of a player trying to incite the crowd ... if that's what they perceive it to be, I'm not sure it was. I think they were just caught up in the excitement. Every hole of the Ryder Cup is like the final hole of a major championship, and you're the leader."

— Jim Awtrey, CEO of the PGA, responding to complaints by European players that American players were inciting the crowd during the Ryder Cup.

"If you watch a game, it's fun. If you play it, it's recreation. If you work at it, it's golf."

— Bob Hope, from "Webster's Dictionary of Quotable Definitions."

Business briefs

Briefs continued from page 12

Rohm and Haas: strong earnings

Philadelphia-based Rohm and Haas Co. reported that demand for its products and faster-than-expected progress on cost reduction and integration efforts combined to produce strong

earnings. But its Morton International acquisition, together with related costs and an increased share base, complicate earnings comparisons with the 1998 period, the company said.

Reported net earnings for the quarter were \$58 million, after restructuring charges and after \$35 million in Morton acquisition-related charges.

Third-quarter sales for the new combined company were \$1,577 million, compared with sales of \$909 million reported for Rohm and Haas alone last year.

Husqvarna acquires Yazoo/Kees

Charlotte, N.C.-based Husqvarna purchased the turf-care assets of Yazoo/Kees, a North American distributor of landscape maintenance equipment based in Beatrice, Neb.

Lesco reports record sales

Cleveland-based Lesco Inc. reported record third-quarter net income of \$5.8 million for the three months ended Sept. 30, a 131 percent improvement from \$2.5 million in 1998's third quarter.

Borland Devoted to Family, Career

Jack Nicklaus remembers Bruce Borland as a "wonderfully talented designer" and a "wonderful person." So do others.

"He was a great guy," said Bob Maibusch, CGCS at Hinsdale GC in Hinsdale, Ill., and Borland's friend. "He really cared about his work. And he had a lot of respect for superintendents and what we do."

"He was deeply committed to his family and career," said Chad Ritterbusch, group manager for Selz/Seabolt Communications, a Chicago public relations firm that represents the American Society of Golf Course Architects, of which Borland was a member. "He was one of those rare individuals who found success on both fronts — personal and professional."

The 40-year-old Borland was killed Oct. 25 in the private Learjet crash that also killed golfer Payne Stewart and four others. Borland was a senior design associate with Nicklaus Design. The Peoria, Ill., native, who held a degree in landscape architecture from the University of Illinois, lived in Jupiter, Fla., with his wife, Kate, and four children.

Nicklaus said Borland approached him a week before the crash to ask permission to do a design job with Stewart under the Nicklaus Design banner. "I said, 'Sure,'" Nicklaus said. "I knew it would be a great opportunity for Bruce, and it would be a good experience for him to work with another golfer and another designer for a different perspective. Bruce was flying to Texas with Payne, and they were using the opportunity and time on this flight to get to know each other better."

Borland, though, was supposed to fly to Dallas on a commercial plane to meet Stewart. He later decided to join Stewart on the private jet, Ritterbusch said.

Borland joined Nicklaus Design in 1990. He was the design associate on 10 Nicklaus golf courses. "He was simply a terrific addition to our company and a good friend," Nicklaus said.

Donations in remembrance of Borland can be made to:

Palm Beach Community Church, Bruce E. Borland Building for Life Fund, 3970 RCA Blvd. #7009, Palm Beach Gardens, Fla. 33410; First Union National Bank Memorial Fund for the Benefit of the Bruce E. Borland Children, 2000 PGA Blvd. #2200, Palm Beach Gardens, Fla. 33408; and the Wycliff Bible Translators, c/o Mark & Deb Borland and Linda & David Captain, P.O. Box 628200, Orlando, Fla. 32862-8200.

"He was a great guy. He really cared about his work. And he had a lot of respect for superintendents and what we do."

— Bob Maibusch, CGCS at Hinsdale GC, remembering golf course architect Bruce Borland



Bill And Ben's Excellent Adventure



Bill Spence

If he wasn't already, Bill Spence became a big Ben Crenshaw fan after working with him at the Ryder Cup. Spence, superintendent at The Country Club at Brookline (Mass.), and Crenshaw, captain of the U.S. Ryder Cup team, collaborated to ready the course for the mega-event, won by the

Americans in thrilling fashion in September.

"Working with Ben Crenshaw was one of the highlights of my professional career," Spence said. "He deserved to win."

The U.S. team was nearly upset — again — but managed to pulverize the Europeans on the last day to win. "You couldn't have written it any better," Spence said of the finale.

Spence said he predicted the Americans would dominate the singles matches on the final day. "That's where they are most com-

fortable," he added. "They have the spotlight solely on them, and they don't have to play with a partner."

Spence wasn't surprised the Europeans ruled in doubles play. During practice rounds, they were buddy-buddy. "They were a fun group of guys and very likeable," he said.

The post-Ryder Cup has brought plenty of work for Spence and his crew.

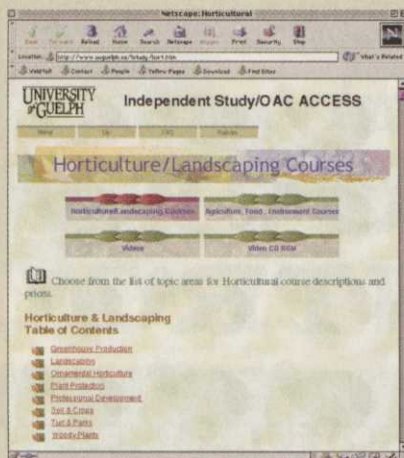
"We have a tremendous amount of restoration work that will probably go well into next year," he said.

Scanning the Web

(**** – Bookmark it and return frequently; * – Look at only if absolutely necessary)

Excuse me if I seem a little blurry-eyed. All this studying about turfgrass and golf course maintenance has left me little time for sleep. But if you think you don't have time to learn the latest information in turfgrass maintenance, think again. Here are some distance learning sites that are worth your while:

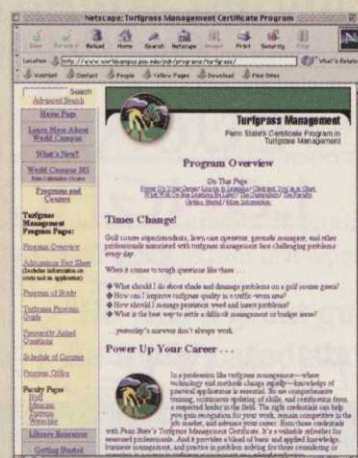
▶ ****<http://www.worldcampus.psu.edu/pub/programs/turfgrass/> – Of all the sites I studied, this had the most complete course offering in turfgrass maintenance, along with other courses specifically aimed at superintendents. Best of all – the courses offered at this site can be accessed online, so you can learn at your own pace and own schedule. Its user-friendly format even gives tips on how to learn online. It's the complete package.



▶ ***<http://www.uoguelph.ca/istudy/hort.htm> – At the University of Guelph (located in Guelph, Ontario, in Canada), traditional correspondence courses are the rule. The programs in golf course maintenance range from environmental management to design, with a host of turf management issues in between. Information is a little harder to find on this site, but it also offers a general professional development division to help you enhance your overall management prowess.

***<http://www.gactr.uga.edu/dl.html> – The University of Georgia's Center for Continuing Education offers a full correspondence course in turfgrass management. The result is a five-year certification in the area, renewable every five years through re-examination. The course covers a variety of subjects across the turf maintenance discipline. It's a survey course designed to help superintendents stay current in the field.

Scanning the Web is compiled by Frank H. Andorka Jr., Golfdom's associate editor, who constantly thirsts for further education. You can contribute to that effort by contacting him at fandorka@advanstar.com to teach him about future column suggestions or sites you think he should visit.



License to Kill

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provide details of the incident and would not discuss the hunters or their experience.

"I'm not going to discuss it," said Brian Vickers, the Pine Hills superintendent, who notes the grub control program has ceased fire.

Golf pro Steve Brzytwa, the club's spokesman for the controversy, called for the investigation to be dropped.

"This is old news as far as I'm concerned," he said, and claimed that using large-caliber firearms to remove raccoons is an accepted practice for golf course maintenance.

"Things like this can potentially happen anywhere," Brzytwa added, noting that "this thing has been turned over to the attorneys and the insurance company."

Radin says he contacted employees from about 15 golf courses in locations similar to Hinckley's rural environment, and none said they used firearms to remove raccoons and varmints. Jeff Bollig, spokesman for GCSAA, would not comment on whether it was an accepted practice or not.

Clarification on Seed Testing

Our recent article on seed certification ("Testing Debate Continues," Sept. 1999) spurred a critical response from Terry Hollifield, executive director of the Georgia Crop Improvement Program. He was particularly concerned with this statement: "In Florida, for example, where the certification program fell by the wayside, inferior quality seed prompted some turf managers to file lawsuits against seed companies after it was allegedly determined that a few Florida seed producers had sold turfgrass seed using fraudulent certification tags from Georgia."

Hollifield challenged that assertion, which was sourced to John Mascaro of TurfTec International, so we checked back with Mascaro to clarify and confirm his comments. Mascaro said his original comments to our writer were not about seed certification, but about similar problems that Florida had experienced with "live vegetative turfgrass material in the form of sprigs and sod," including several where Georgia tags were placed on the shipment.

Mascaro continued: "I acknowledge that there were numerous problems in the past, but I believe that the Georgia certification program was never to blame. In fact, because of the past problems (with the Florida sod program), I always recommend that all my customers purchase sod from Georgia because of its outstanding certification and quality control."

Golfdom apologizes for this reporting error.