

# Off The Fringe

NEWS WITH A HOOK

## Business briefs

### Scotts teams with Landmark Seed

Marysville, Ohio-based the Scotts Co. has teamed with Landmark Seed Co. to distribute Scotts' turfgrass seed products through a national distribution network.

The two companies are utilizing a network of seed distributors to sell products to a broad-based market. Spokane, Wash.-based Landmark and the regional distribution network will promote and sell Scotts' products to various customers, including golf courses and golf construction companies, according to the agreement reached Oct. 1.

In other Scotts news, David Harrison was named chief financial officer and executive vice president, succeeding Jean Mordo, who is now finance chief for international operations.

### Flowtronex acquires Mikotech

Dallas-based Flowtronex PSI acquired Riverside, Calif.-based Mikotech, strengthening the company's direct-service capabilities to courses in Southern California and Nevada.

Mikotech's seven service technicians stationed in Southern California and Las Vegas will remain with Flowtronex PSI as its Western service group, with plans to increase the total service staff to 12. The acquisition includes a 10,000-square-foot office complex/warehouse.

### Textron completes agreement

Racine, Wis.-based Textron Turf Care And Specialty Products completed a three-year supply agreement with Santa Monica, Calif.-based American Golf, which operates more than 300 golf courses and practice centers in the United States and United Kingdom.

In other news, Textron Turf Care's parent company, Providence, R.I.-based Textron, will

*Briefs continue on page 14*

## Dursban Alert Sounded

**D**ow AgroSciences has sounded a rallying cry for superintendents using Dursban to make themselves heard in Washington.

Dursban's active ingredient, chlorpyrifos, is one of the organophosphate pesticides being scrutinized by the EPA as part of ongoing implementation of the Food Quality Protection Act. EPA recently completed a risk assessment of chlorpyrifos and began a 60-day public comment period on Oct. 1. Dow is urging superintendents to write to EPA to let them know that continued use of Dursban is important to them.

According to Dow's Tim Maniscalco, Dursban is a "primary tool" for golf courses that may be lost to new regulations unless users act now. Superintendents "are an important group that need to be considered when any decisions are made on this compound," he said. "They need to make certain that their voices are heard."

Maniscalco believes superintendents can make a difference in the decision-making process. "People in Washington will take notice when voters let their voices be heard," he said.

He suggested that superintendents contact their Dow Agro representatives to learn more about the issue and how to respond. A Web site with key information is also planned.

Under the FQPA process, the risks and benefits of dozens of turf chemicals are being reviewed under a controversial set of standards developed by EPA in response to a federal law that was originally widely supported by industry and environmentalists alike.

Dursban is among the first widely used golf course products to reach this stage of the review. Despite the need for superintendents to comment immediately, Maniscalco noted that it will likely still be several years before a final ruling is made.

## Humdinger of a Price

**I**f you've got money to burn and really want to make an impression on the golfers at your course, have we got something for you.

Introducing the Humdinger golf car, an electric vehicle manufactured in the mold of the muscular Hummer sport-utility vehicle. The Humdinger, retailing for a mere \$15,600, is perfect for cruising the golf course or for light off-road excursions. Check out these features:

- 3.8 horsepower electric motor;
- 22-inch knobby tires;
- street-legal configuration;
- top speed of 30 miles per hour.

The Humdinger is sold at In Celebration of Golf, a 12,000-square-foot golf retail store located in Scottsdale, Ariz. "It's perfect for someone who wants to make a statement," says Peter Meyer of In Celebration of Golf.

A statement?

Yeah, like, "I'm rich, I'm bored and my golf game sucks, so I bought this yellow toy to impress my buddies."





## Business briefs

*Briefs continued from page 12*

acquire Port Washington, Wis.-based OmniQuip International in a cash transaction valued at about \$477 million. OmniQuip is a manufacturer of light construction equipment, including telescopic material handlers, aerial work platforms and skid steer loaders.

The agreement was to be finalized in late September.

### ABT meets with analysts

Henderson, Nev.-based AgriBioTech said it would suffer a significant loss for its fiscal year ended June 30, according to a report. ABT blames the loss on the bankruptcy of a former customer, the Hechinger Co., a lumber and hardware chain.

In other company news, ABT's senior executive team recently met with sell-side analysts that cover ABT to review and update them on the company's business plan; to announce that the company has received proposals for and is working on completing new, long-term debt financing to provide working capital to carry out its business plan; and to present data that supports the company's expectations of profitability in fiscal year 2000.

### Eco Soil revenues up, income down

Rancho Bernardo, Calif.-based Eco Soil Systems reported revenues for the three months ended June 30 of \$40.7 million, compared to \$26.9 million during the same period in 1998. It was comprised of \$34.2 million from turf business and \$6.5 million from agriculture sales and services.

The company reported net income for the quarter of \$1.1 million, or \$.06 per share, compared to net income of \$1.6 million, or \$.08 per share, for the same quarter last year.

### King & Bear under construction

Construction began on The King & The Bear, the World Golf Village's second golf course and the first collaboration by Arnold Palmer and Jack Nicklaus. The course, to be owned and operated by Hilton Head, S.C.-based Scratch Golf Co., is scheduled to open next fall in St. Augustine, Fla.

"The property is exceptional, and will lend

*Briefs continue on page 16*

# The Full (Of It) Monty

**F**irst, it was professionals complaining about the difficult conditions at Carnoustie. Then, it was complaints about the course condition at Medinah. Now, it's European players saying fans shouldn't be allowed to cheer for their team in the Ryder Cup.

If professional golfers want to be considered athletes, they need to play under adverse conditions. Colin Montgomerie was one of the worst offenders at the Ryder Cup, proving that France isn't the only country to produce w(h)ine. Monty made an annoying habit of backing off 2-foot putts every time a baby belched in the tri-state area. We think Peter King of CNN/SI summed up his display best:

"Colin Montgomerie ought to shut up, stop glaring at the crowd and play golf. The Ryder Cup was fun to watch, but Montgomerie was a wuss throughout. What is so horribly unsportsmanlike about a crowd that is rabidly rooting for the home team and cheers when a foe misses a putt? Golf is so ridiculous about these things. Imagine Yankee Stadium, after Roger Clemens strikes out Chipper Jones in the World Series, being silent. Join the real world, Monty."

## You Know You've Made It as a Superintendent ...

... WHEN THEY NAME A SALAD AFTER YOU ON THE CLUB'S MENU

At Doral Resort and CC in Miami, you can stop by Champions Sports Bar & Grill after playing 18 and munch on Dan Dupree's Greens Keeper Salad, featuring romaine lettuce, garlic croutons, parmesan cheese and caesar dressing.

Now, if you don't like the green speeds, you can go looking for Dupree. But if you don't dig the greens, as in the salad, go looking for the chef. Club rules.



## Can't Keep a Good Man Down

Superman would be impressed with Mark Connor, the superintendent of the South Course at Firestone CC in Akron, Ohio, who suffered a head injury after he was hit by an automobile while driving his golf car in August.

The accident occurred one week before the NEC Invitational, the biggest annual event at Firestone, and landed Connor in intensive care for three days where he was treated for bleeding on the brain. Initial reports said Connor would

miss the tournament on the course that he had (literally) almost killed himself to prepare.

But Connor showed up at Firestone on the second day of the tournament just in time to watch Tiger Woods take control. Brian Mabie, Firestone's director of golf course maintenance, was happy to see him.

"Connor deserves a lot of credit," Mabie said. "He baby-sat the course all summer."



## Business briefs

*Briefs continued from page 14*

itself to a natural rather than more artificial design," Palmer said.

### **Toro, Maruyama extend agreement**

Bloomington, Minn.-based The Toro Co. and Maruyama Manufacturing Co. agreed to a four-year extension to deliver hand-held landscaping equipment under the Toro brand through the year 2003.

Redmond, Wash.-based Maruyama will continue to manufacture string trimmers, brushcutters, hedge trimmers, edgers, pruners and gas-powered backpack blowers to be sold under the Toro brand in the United States and Canada.

### **Meadowbrook to acquire KSL**

Beverly Hills, Calif.-based Meadowbrook Golf Group has united with Apollo Real Estate Investment Fund IV to form a jointly owned company to acquire KSL Fairways Golf Corp.

Arnold Rosenstein, chairman of Meadowbrook, said that the acquisition of KSL Fairways was expected to close by the end of September. KSL Fairways includes 30 golf courses at 24 locations in the eastern United States, primarily in Virginia, Maryland, Florida and Wisconsin.

### **U.S. Chemical Storage established**

U.S. Chemical Storage LLC, a new hazardous storage building manufacturer, recently opened its headquarters in Boone, N.C. The company offers prefabricated, relocatable hazardous material storage buildings that provide fire-rated, segregated, safe storage for flammables, combustible liquids and other chemicals.

### **Deere declares dividend**

Moline, Ill.-based Deere & Co.'s board of directors declared the regular quarterly dividend of 22 cents per share, payable Nov. 1, to stockholders of record by Sept. 30.

### **YAZOO/KEES completes acquisition**

Jackson, Miss.-based YAZOO/KEES Power Equipment finalized its acquisition of PUG Inc., Applied Design Technology and CheTech Co., all located in Chetek, Wis.

# Dumb, Dumber ... Dumbest

## SUPERINTENDENTS STRIKE BACK

By Jerry Coldiron Jr., CGCS

**S**uperintendents take more criticism than Notre Dame's head football coach, with less reason. Since we find ourselves at the mercy of Mother Nature more often than Al Roker, the circumstances that create golfers' perceived problems with the courses are often beyond our control. That's why, at first glance, Geoff Shackelford's "Dumb and Dumber, Superintendent Style" column in the May/June issue hit some of us so hard. It's frustrating to see that sort of criticism in print — especially at a glance, which is sometimes all we busy superintendents have time to do.

That said, the column hit closer to home than most of us want to admit. I've been a superintendent for more than 20 years, and I've experienced almost all of the situations that Shackelford outlined. But if you put aside personal pride and reread the column with an unbiased eye, it was funny — damn funny. And remember: Golfers have provided us with our own personal "Dumb and Dumber" material for years. If I earned a commission for every golfer's comment that split my sides with its complete lack of understanding of what it takes to run a golf course, I'd be retired to Jamaica by now. So as painful as Shackelford's comments might have been at first glance, we must realize that golfers have repaid us tenfold.

With the help of my staff, friends, fellow superintendents and TurfNet buddies, we devised a David Letterman-style list of comments that golfers (not to mention golf professionals, television announcers, turf magazine editors and witty golf writers) have made to superintendents that have had us roaring with laughter. Sit back and enjoy:

**10.** Golfer to superintendent — "Can you cover the bunkers with plastic so when you irrigate — or when it rains — the sand will stay dry?"

**9.**irate golfer to topdresser operator — "Stop! Stop! Can't you see you're losing your sand load all over the green?"

**8.** Golfer after watching the U.S. Open on TV: "Could we install some straight lines from the tees at our club so the players will not get lost (referring to dew walks)?"

**7.** Message left on superintendent's answering machine by a member after a major flood hit the area: "Do you not realize we have a city water valve to fill the irrigation lake? Someone on your crew has left the valve on too long, and it is flooding the golf course and surrounding community."

**6.** Golfer to the superintendent: "The new coolers you put out on the course are great, but the ice water is a little too cold."

**5.** Grounds chairman asks superintendent during a major drought: "When it rains, could we somehow get a huge plastic bag or balloon to capture the water for storage and later irrigation use?"

**4.** After a heavy rain, the golf professional asks: "Is it cartpaths only today? I suppose I

