

Off The Fringe

Business briefs

Michaud resigns from Pebble

One month before the 2000 AT&T Pebble Beach National Pro-Am and about six months before the U.S. Open, Mark Michaud resigned as superintendent of Pebble Beach Golf Links.

Michaud was at Pebble Beach for seven years and was reported to be looking for work on the East Coast.

Deere sues Toro

Moline, Ill.-based Deere & Co. is suing Bloomington, Minn.-based Toro Co. for allegedly infringing a patent for a turf cultivating machine. Deere claims that Toro and a distributor are illegally manufacturing and marketing aerators that use Deere's technology.

A Toro spokesman denied its competitor's allegation.

"We honor others patents and aggressively pursue our own," the spokesman told *Golfdom*. "As this suit goes forward, we're confident that Toro will prevail."

Toro rebounds in '99

Toro Co. reported that results for the year ending Oct. 31 rebounded over last year and are in line with expectations. Momentum from fiscal 1999 is expected to carry over into this year, the company said.

Net sales for the year were \$1.27 billion, compared to \$1.11 billion in 1998, an increase of 14.8 percent. Net income after restructuring and other unusual expenses was \$35.1 million compared to \$4.1 million in 1998.

"Toro rebounded solidly in fiscal 1999 with strong performances from our professional and residential business segments," said Kendrick B. Melrose, chairman and CEO.

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Mona at Six

HOW DOES GCSAA'S CEO EAT AN ELEPHANT? ONE BITE AT A TIME.

Editor's note: Publisher/Editor Pat Jones recently chatted with his former boss, GCSAA CEO Steve Mona. Jones, a former GCSAA director of public affairs, calls Mona "one of the best leaders I've ever known" and "the right person in the right job at the right time."

1. Does it really seem possible that you've been CEO of the association for six years? Has time flown or crawled?



The time has absolutely flown by. It doesn't feel at all like six years. That's because I thoroughly enjoy what I'm doing, and anytime that's the case, time is secondary. Secondly, the challenges we've had have been absorbing. Your sense of time disappears.

2. What were the big challenges you and your new team faced at the time?

The biggest thing was building trust. There were three dimensions to that challenge. First, building trust between the membership and the "administration." We were new, unknown quantities and the organization had been through a lot. Second, we had to build trust between staff and the executive leadership. Nobody knew each other, and there was

a lot of history. Finally, we had to establish trust between GCSAA and the other golf associations. The association had been pretty isolated within golf for a number of years.

3. What should the average member who hasn't visited the Lawrence headquarters know about the GCSAA staff that he or she probably wouldn't realize?

First, it's a dedicated group of people. Not all of our staff are golfers and they're certainly not superintendents, but they just seem to have an innate desire to do right by the members. They take on the challenges that our members face and they take them very personally.

Secondly, they would find a phenomenally well-educated group. My bachelor's degree sometimes makes me feel a little intimidated by comparison (to other staffers).

Finally, they are people that get the big picture and understand how their jobs relate to it. They're not working in a vacuum.

4. Of which accomplishments are you most proud over the past five years?

The biggest is increased recognition and respect for the individual superintendent. I can't say that any one specific thing has led to that or how much of it we can take credit for — and I really don't care. But it's irrefutable that we've made gains.

Second, there has been a large increase in the recognition and credi-

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'Links for Life' debuts

Golf Digest and the American Heart Association are starting a public awareness campaign called Links for Life to improve survival from cardiac emergencies on golf courses and in other public places. It encourages golf courses to strengthen their emergency response programs and will help educate golfers about what they can do when a cardiac emergency strikes.

Golf courses are among the most common public places for cardiac arrests. They are also among the most difficult for emergency medical providers to reach quickly. The first phase of Links for Life is a call to North America's 16,000 golf courses to add automated external defibrillators and train staff members to use the life-saving devices.

For more information on Links for Life, call the American Heart Association at 214-706-1665.

Zeneca teams with chemistry firm

Wilmington, Del.-based Cambridge Discovery Chemistry will take over responsibility for Zeneca Agrochemicals' chemistry research facility within Zeneca's R&D Center in Richmond, Calif., the two companies announced in December.

"The collaboration offers us the opportunity to combine world-class combinatorial chemistry expertise in a flexible research arrangement which will greatly benefit both our businesses," said David Evans, Zeneca's director of R&D.

Zeneca Agrochemicals is part of AstraZeneca PLC, which plans to merge with Novartis AG to form Syngenta. The deal is expected to be finalized later this year.

Sanctuary gains Audubon status

Scottsdale, Ariz.-based Sanctuary GC at Westworld recently received certification from the Audubon International Institute as Arizona's first Signature Status Golf Course.

The goal of Audubon's program is to merge wildlife conservation, habitat enhancement and environmental improvement with the economic agenda associated with land development.

Over 50 And Rocking

We asked 58-year-old Gary Grigg, a recipient of GCSAA's Distinguished Service Award for 2000, what it's like to be a successful superintendent over 50. Grigg is CGCS of Royal Poinciana GC in Naples, Fla.

On the job market:

I realize statistics reveal there are few active Class A superintendents over 50. There are several reasons for that — one is money. As you progress in the industry, the experience you gain becomes more valuable, and you expect to become well-compensated for it. A few clubs are willing to compensate for experience and a proven track record, and these clubs hire the best of the older superintendents. However, many clubs seem interested in hiring younger, up-and-coming superintendents for less money. I can't fault the clubs for wanting to save dollars. They may get a great talent — and they may not. The bottom line: Past performance is a good indication of future performance.

I also believe there are fewer superintendents over 50 because many of them tire of the grind. Today's golfers demand ever-increasing perfection on the courses they play, and the business is getting more complex as we strive to reach that perfection. If you're not willing to continue your education, you can fall behind in a hurry.



On continued personal growth:

When you cease to learn new things, you stop growing as a person. I continue to challenge myself both in and out of golf. I have spent my career trying to stay on the cutting edge of technology in our business. Along the way, I raised four children, earned a pilot's license, got my SCUBA license and learned to speak a few foreign languages, although not as well as I would like.

On the need to know:

Golf course maintenance is an ever-changing business and our management practices change from time to time. The newer superintendents coming out

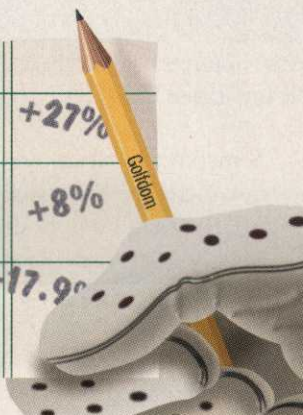
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Knowing the score

Certified superintendent salaries average 27 percent higher than salaries of superintendents who are not certified.

From 1995 to 1998, salaries for golf course superintendents increased 8 percent from \$49,269 to \$53,205

CGCS with more than 20 years of experience commanded the most significant average salary increase at 17.9 percent, from \$56,618 in 1995 to \$66,774 in 1998.



SOURCE: GCSAA, 1999; ILLUSTRATION: DAN BEEDY