

# Off The Fringe

## Business briefs

### ProShot, American Golf team up

San Juan Capistrano, Calif.-based ProShot Golf, provider of Global Positioning System information and communication services, has teamed with Santa Monica, Calif.-based American Golf to provide the management company with GPS services. American Golf manages more than 300 properties.

### Textron, St. Andrews extend pact

Racine, Wis.-based Textron Turf Care And Specialty Products extended its agreement with St. Andrews Links Trust to remain the exclusive turf maintenance equipment supplier for St. Andrews Links in Fife, Scotland. St. Andrews' famous "Old Course" is hosting the British Open in July. According to the agreement, St. Andrews, the recognized birthplace of golf, will only use turf maintenance equipment and light utility vehicles manufactured by TTCSP.

### FTGA, U. of Florida unite

The Florida Turfgrass Association and the University of Florida have joined in a new funding initiative for environmental research. The university will continually update the association on its activities and findings.

Twice a year, the FTGA will send reports to its member clubs informing them how the university is spending their money. The university is committed to adding new professors to its staff and increasing their dedicated testing facilities from 15 acres to 80 acres in an advance effort to prepare for this new research.

### Companies form trade alliance

The biopesticide industry has formed a new coalition called the Biopesticide Industry Al-

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## Crying Fowl

### COOT KILLINGS ON CALIFORNIA COURSE SPARK WAR OF WORDS

By James E. Guyette

**T**he La Cumbre Golf and CC in Santa Barbara, Calif., is in a major flap over the killing of course-fouling water fowl known as coots, migratory birds that feed on tender grass sprouts, seeds and assorted aquatic animals.

The controversy received considerable coverage by local newspapers, radio and television last year, with readers of the *Santa Barbara News-Press* rating it among the top stories of 1999.

The squawking continues this year. Neighbors and superintendents throughout California are still angry over La Cumbre's coot control strategies late last year. There were accounts of course staffers allegedly stuffing trapped birds into plastic bags, and then breaking their wings and legs before asphyxiating the birds in a shed on course property. The course does have a state wildlife permit to kill coots, but neighbors' feathers remain ruffled over the way in which the coots were controlled.

"The behavior of the golf course has been so appalling that it has sparked a lot of attention," says local resident Jon Hanlon. "People don't want to know that someone down the block is doing these things."

A La Cumbre representative criticized those who question the course's coot control strategies.

"There has been an inordinate amount of opposition to the managing of coots at La Cumbre," says Antonio R. Romasanta, a member of the course and chairman of La Cumbre's coot committee. In a letter to Golf-dom, Romasanta, a lawyer, observes that this kind of protest "is not unusual for this area" because of the liberal views of its population.

"There is no logic, rhyme or reason for the positions taken by some of these advocates," Romasanta says.

Romasanta declined to be interviewed, saying that "we have concluded that any publicity seems to stir (the protesters') passions. We believe that at the current time a low profile is the wiser course to follow," he said.

LaCumbre's staff has stopped killing coots, but Hanlon says he's still concerned about the matter. Hanlon contends that concerned callers to the club have been left scratching their heads in puzzlement as staffers there have criticized them for not doing more to ban human abortions. "They're not addressing the issue," Hanlon says.

The coot, *Fulcina americana*, resembles a cross between a duck and a chicken. It's also known as a mudhen or swamphen. Between its appetite for turf, and its notorious droppings, a course invaded by coots can disgust even the most dedicated golfers.

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"We've had such a hassle over this subject," says Doug Weddle, La Cumbre's superintendent, who also declined to converse about coots except to note that "it's a very destructive bird."

Killing coots is an industrywide public relations debacle that is also a failure as an effective control method, according to John Pollok, director of golf course operations at Robinson Ranch, a 36-hole public facility in Los Angeles County. Coots fear dogs more than lawyers, guns and superintendents, he says. "I'm totally against killing any animals," Pollok adds.

At Robinson Ranch, there's a border collie that effectively patrols the facility's six lakes to chase coots. Pollok says trapping coots and relocating them to other sites is another control method.

"When stuff like this makes the news, it can be a sticky wicket" for any superintendent, especially when club members start raising objections, says James C. Husting, CGCS and chairman of CGCSA's government relations committee in Fresno, Calif.

La Cumbre has brought a dog on board for coot duty, but Hanlon questions the sincerity of the course's gesture.

"(The course) has a border collie, but the border collie has arthritis," Hanlon claims. "It just kind of rides along in the golf car. It's not really a deterrent."

La Cumbre officials won't discuss the course's border collie, but Hanlon observes that the coots are more confused than fearful of the crippled canine, and they merely waddle away in puzzlement before making a quick return.



**HOLEY**  
states

Florida and California are tied for having the most course openings in 1999—making them ideal spots for practicing your favorite Sunday ritual.

Florida	36
California	36
Texas	31
Michigan	28
Ohio	26
New York	21
Arizona	21
Georgia	19
Illinois	16
Missouri	16

SOURCE: NATIONAL GOLF FOUNDATION; ILLUSTRATION: DAN BEEDY

## Scanning the Web

Frank Andorka reviews **PowerPoint** tutorial sites.

The best advice I ever received about public speaking was to remember that you are your own best visual aid. But isn't it cool to present with all the bells and whistles? If you've been intimidated by PowerPoint in the past, here a few sites that will help you overcome your fear. (All sites start with <http://> unless otherwise noted): (\*\*\*\*\* – **Bookmark it and return frequently**; \* – **Look at only if absolutely necessary**)



also shows what a completed presentation might look like.

\*\*\*\*[einstein.cs.uri.edu/tutorials/csc101/powerpoint/ppt.html](http://einstein.cs.uri.edu/tutorials/csc101/powerpoint/ppt.html) – You won't find flashy graphics if you visit this site. What you will find is

\*\*\*\*\*[www.geocities.com/Athens/Ithaca/9112/Powerpoint/powerpoint.html](http://www.geocities.com/Athens/Ithaca/9112/Powerpoint/powerpoint.html) – If they taught PowerPoint in kindergarten, this is the site they would use. It's a nine-step tutorial that walks you through creating a PowerPoint presentation, with screen grabs showing you details for every step along the way. Along with specifics about PowerPoint itself, it

an excellent PowerPoint tutorial created by a professor at the University of Rhode Island. It takes you logically through each of the steps necessary to create a great presentation. A table of contents helps you get the information easily, no matter what level of help you need.

\*\*\*[www.ga.k12.pa.us/curtech/powerwk.htm](http://www.ga.k12.pa.us/curtech/powerwk.htm) – The site is text heavy and is probably better used as a PowerPoint guide to hang on the wall next to your desk. It's a little less detailed than the other sites listed here and could be confusing to someone who is completely unfamiliar with PowerPoint.

*Scanning the Web is compiled by Frank H. Andorka Jr., Golfdom's associate editor, who never passes up the opportunity to bore large groups of people with his public-speaking presentations. You can reach him at [fandorka@advanstar.com](mailto:fandorka@advanstar.com) with future column suggestions or sites you think he should visit.*