

# Off The Fringe

NEWS WITH A HOOK

## Business briefs

### Dow Ag purchases Rohm and Haas' ag chemical business

Dow AgroSciences LLC, a subsidiary of the Dow Chemical Co., has purchased Rohm and Haas' agricultural chemicals business, including working capital, for about \$1 billion.

As a result of the merger, Indianapolis-based Dow AgroSciences will acquire Rohm and Haas' fungicides, insecticides, herbicides and other product lines, trademarks and license to all agricultural uses of its biotechnology assets.

"The decision to sell our agricultural chemicals business was a difficult one, especially considering the long history with our company," said Raj Gupta, chairman and CEO of Philadelphia-based Rohm and Haas. "However, as we continue to reshape our portfolio for the future, it has become increasingly evident that the agricultural chemicals business will flourish more as a part of a global firm with a stronger presence serving the agricultural markets."

### Adventis to spin off CropScience

France-based Adventis says it will spin off Aventis CropScience, the company's Research Triangle Park, N.C.-based agrochemicals unit. A report says the offshoot will either be sold or maintained as a new company.

### Simplot gains rights for Polyon technology

Boise, Idaho-based J.R. Simplot Co.'s Turf and Horticulture group and Sylacauga, Ala.-based Pursell Technologies have reached an agreement to allow Simplot to utilize Polyon Pro, Pursell's controlled-release fertilizer. The agreement secures exclusive marketing rights to Polyon technology for use in Sim-

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## Shoemaker Bares 'Sole'

By Larry Aylward, Editor

**S**tep into the world of shoemaker Richard Maltby. You might be surprised at some of the things he's thinking when the topic turns to golf shoes.

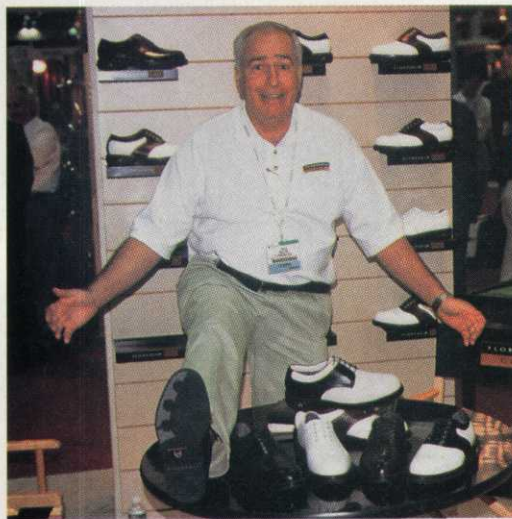
*Golfdom* recently talked with Maltby, technical director for Florsheim Golf, at the PGA Show in Orlando. Maltby, a shoemaker for more than 30 years, says he's skeptical that alternative spikes became popular because they're gentle on golf course greens.

"The reason alternative spikes became popular is because steel spikes were tearing up clubhouse carpeting," Maltby insists. "I have a suspicion that the golf course is being used to justify the beautification of the clubhouse."

Maltby admits that superintendents, who welcomed alternative spikes, won't be happy to hear that he doesn't design golf shoes specifically to be golf course friendly. "My object is to design a shoe that sells," he says.

Maltby says most golfers have little idea of the strategy involved in a shoe's design. Golfers aren't going to look at shoes if they're not visually attractive.

Maltby designs some shoes in relation to the dynamics of a typical swing. The shoes are designed to help keep a golfer's body stable. Of course, a golfer may not realize that.



Roger Maltby is surrounded by his shoes in the Florsheim Golf booth at the PGA Show.

Maltby says most golfers will glance at a shoe's bottom. If it appears "technical" and the golfer utters the word "cool" while studying it, Maltby says the golfer is probably satisfied.

Despite Maltby's intent to design shoes to sell, he's conscious that superintendents are under pressure to keep their courses in near-immaculate condition — and he wants to help them.

"I would never make a shoe that would rip up the course," Maltby says. "And if I can make a shoe that's course-friendly and salable, then I've won."

Interestingly, Maltby says he has never heard from superintendents who are concerned about shoes tearing up turf. But he's all ears. "I'd be happy to hear some input from them," he says.

So, superintendents, the shoe is on the other foot. You can contact Maltby at [mobitech@juno.com](mailto:mobitech@juno.com).



### Business briefs

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plot fertilizer products marketed to the turf-grass industry in the majority of the Midwest and the eastern United States.

#### **Simplot Partners acquires Evergro's U.S. division**

San Diego-based Simplot Partners has acquired Evergro's U.S. division, Evergro Sales. Nick Spardy, vice president and general manager of Simplot Partners, says Evergro's three U.S. locations (Woodinville, Wash., Portland, Wash., and Meridian, Idaho) will enable Simplot to better serve customers in the Pacific Northwest.

In a related matter, Oxnard, Calif.-based Turf Solutions is also now part of Simplot Partners. Turf Solutions' distribution center has custom seed-blending capabilities of more than 50,000 pounds of production daily.

#### **BASF, Scotts sign pact**

BASF Corp. and The Scotts Co. announced they have signed an agreement for Scotts to begin marketing Cygnus (kresoxim-metyl) and Sanmite (pyridaben) in the United States.

## Play 18, Peruse the Art

To view fine art, most people think they have to go to an art museum. If you told them they could check out Van Gogh or Picasso at the links, they would label you dumb *and* dumber.

But art and golf do mix, at least in Aurora, Colo., where Murphy Creek and Saddle Rock golf courses boast some of the best art in the city, thanks to the Art in Public Places Commission. The commission, established in 1994, is composed of Aurora citizens who develop policies and procedures for selecting and maintaining art for the city. Murphy Creek and Saddle Rock belong to the municipality.

The first major project the commission undertook was at Saddle Rock. There, arriving golfers are greeted by a bronze sculpture called *A Change in Rules*, which depicts Native Americans playing a game of Shinny Ball. Several paintings and mixed-media pieces are in the Saddle Rock clubhouse.

Other bronze sculptures can be



Some of the coolest art in Aurora, Colo., including these two statues, can be found at Murphy Creek CC.

found at the new Murphy Creek GC next to the clubhouse. Currently, there are two sculptures, one of Bobby Jones and the other of Babe Dedrickson Zaharias. Eventually, arts and golf officials want to erect six sculptures, depicting a "mythical foursome" of golfing greats, a notable caddie and a famous golf course architect all standing together.

— Jason Stahl

## Scanning the Web

Frank Andorka reviews [aggieturf.tamu.edu/golf/gcindex.html](http://aggieturf.tamu.edu/golf/gcindex.html)

(All sites are preceded by <http://> unless otherwise noted)

With this issue's focus on plant health, I searched for a site that would give superintendents tools to help them keep their turf as healthy as possible. I discovered a wonderful site from Texas A&M University that may help you do your job more effectively (and provide proof to the green committee that you know what you're doing):

[aggieturf.tamu.edu/golf/gcindex.html](http://aggieturf.tamu.edu/golf/gcindex.html) — The opening page welcomes you to the site with a simple green background with yellow writing on it. On the left-hand side, there are five categories: layering, fertilization, weed index, insect index and disease index. Don't be fooled by its simplicity: Like

a great mystery novel, the site unfolds slowly, and its power lies below the surface.

The layering section gives a good refresher course on the causes of layering, such as black layer and cement layer. It also outlines the most effective ways of eliminating them.

The fertilization section is also intriguing. It contains a step-by-step program for calibrating spreaders and has separate information on drop and rotary spreaders. It also has a fertilizer calculator that computes how much fertilizer should be put down per acre (depending on factors such as grass type, weather and others), in addition to a section on how to take a good soil sample.

It's useful information — whether you've been in the business for 30 years or are

just starting your first year as a superintendent.

The gold mines of this site, however, are its indexes. They all follow a similar pattern: they include drawings/photographs of the pest and hotlinks to a chart that suggests ways to control them (although the photographs on the diseases seemed few and far between). This is timely information delivered in an easy-to-grasp format. It will help superintendents make more accurate diagnoses of their pest problems.

I chose this site because of its overall thoroughness. It's one to bookmark and return to whenever you have a question about your turf's health.

*Golfdom's associate editor Frank H. Andorka Jr. compiles Scanning the Web and wishes he were as healthy as some of the turf he's seen on golf courses. You can reach him at [fan-dorka@advanstar.com](mailto:fan-dorka@advanstar.com) with future column suggestions or sites you think he should visit.*