

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

Step 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.

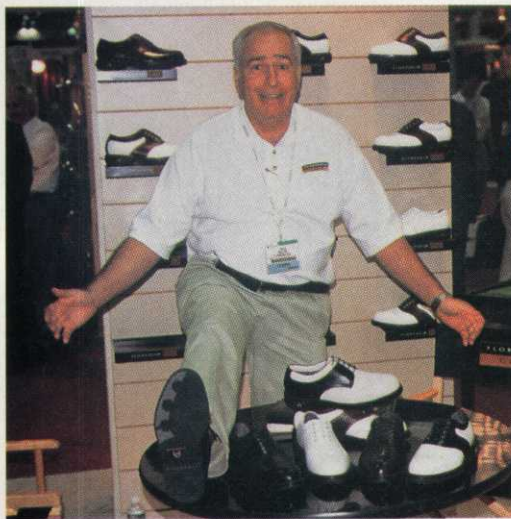
Golfdom recently talked with Maltby, technical director for Florsheim Golf, at the PGA Show in Orlando. Maltby, a shoemaker for more than 30 years, says he's skeptical that alternative spikes became popular because they're gentle on golf course greens.

"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.