

Off The Fringe

Business briefs

Dow completes purchase

Dow Chemical and Rohm and Haas announced the completion of the sale of Rohm and Haas' agricultural business to Dow for about \$1 billion. The acquisition will be integrated into Dow's Dow AgroSciences LLC subsidiary.

Aventis narrows list

Aventis has narrowed the list of potential buyers of its Crop Science division to BASF, Bayer and Dow Chemical, according to Dow Jones. In related news, Aventis Environmental Science, the public health and hygiene business of Aventis Crop Science, sold its household insecticides business to Sumitomo Chemical Co.

NGCOA makes progress on depreciation issue

The National Golf Course Owners Association, with the assistance of KPMG LLP, says it's making progress toward resolving the issue of allowing depreciation of tees, greens and sand bunkers with the Internal Revenue Service.

NGCOA says the issue has been entered into the IRS Chief Counsel's 2001 Work Plan, which means an attorney has been assigned to the depreciation issue. Inclusion on the work plan means it is likely the issue will be resolved by the end of this year, but it requires that the issue be resolved no later than the end of 2002.

DuPont shelving Benlate

DuPont announced it will stop selling the fungicide Benlate at the end of the year. Benlate has been on the market for 33 years, but DuPont has had legal and financial problems with it since 1989.

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Deere Runs to Irrigation Business

EQUIPMENT GIANT EXPANDS PRODUCT LINE THROUGH ACQUISITION

By Frank H. Andorka Jr., Associate Editor

Moline, Ill.-based John Deere & Co. recently acquired Richton International Corp. and plans to establish a larger foothold in the irrigation business in the process.

Richton's irrigation equipment business, Century Supply Corp., will be combined with Deere's existing irrigation business under the direction of Dave Werning, president of Deere's landscape division.

Century Rain Aid provided Richton with 80 percent of its sales last year.

"Experts estimate that the irrigation segment of our business, with installa-

tion and labor, could be as much as \$5 billion," Werning said. "We want to be able to provide customers with as many facets of the irrigation business as we can."

Though the irrigation business will currently focus on landscapers

and irrigation installers, Werning said he expects to coordinate with Deere's golf division to expand sales of irrigation equipment to golf courses. The structure for such coordination hasn't been determined.

"We can exploit the golf course relationships that Century already has as well as our own," Werning said.

Century complements other aspects of Deere's irrigation holdings better than other potential acquisitions in the past, Werning noted.

"Century allows us to coordinate more pieces to the puzzle than other transactions would have," he said. "It creates the distribution network we need

to have an adequate reach to irrigation professionals."

Werning said Deere Credit would also likely be involved in developing the irrigation business by providing financing for irrigation projects.

'We want to be able to provide customers with as many facets of the irrigation business as we can.'

DAVE WERNING

Suit Yourself

CLOTHES DON'T MAKE THE MAN – ABILITY DOES

By Mike Hamilton

I see more superintendents wearing suits and ties, and I'm perplexed. Does a suit and tie make that person a better superintendent, or is it a shield to hide his inadequacy? Let me answer this by telling you the story of my own employment history.

On the first day of my summer vacation when I was 16, my mother woke me at 6 a.m. "Get your lazy butt out of bed and go find a job," she said.



DYNAMIC GRAPHICS

I pulled on a pair of cut-off jeans, slid into my flip-flops and walked out the door. Once outside, I heard the sound of an engine coming from across the street. As I looked to see where the sound was coming from, I saw the golf course maintenance building there, and it occurred to me that a golf course was as good a place as any to get my first job.

As I approached the office, a well-dressed, well-groomed young man came out followed by the superintendent, who was shouting that the kid was the worst employee he ever had.

With my impeccable sense of timing, I asked the superintendent if he needed help.

"Do you have some real shoes?" he asked.

"Sure do," I replied — and that was the start of my golf course career.

I worked at that golf course until I got out of high school. After graduation, my boss told me I was the best employee he ever had and suggested I attend turf school.

Now let's flash forward 25 years to three years ago. I interviewed for a high-profile superintendent position and received permission to tour the golf course before I appeared before the green committee. Since I was not going to have time to change clothes, I wore my suit on the tour.

During my inspection of the equipment, I talked to the service technician who was backlapping a reel. When I squatted down so he could hear me, the reel snagged my tie and jerked me and my tie to the ground. As a result, I cut my chin and got lapping compound and blood on my white shirt. I cleaned myself up as much as possible and proceeded.

As I strolled in for my interview, the same well-dressed friend I had replaced at my first golf course walked out. He had on a three-piece Gucci suit, a gold watch and enough cologne to knock a buzzard off a garbage truck. He eyeballed me, laughed and said, "You've got no chance of getting this job — you look like you've been in a brawl."

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Quotable

"Professional Development Seminar."

— The description the American Association of Golf Course Architects used to describe daily golf outings during its four-day annual conference in Columbus, Ohio. The "seminars" included trips to famous courses such as Double Eagle GC, Scioto CC, The Golf Club and Muirfield Village GC.

"Jack Nicklaus has put a very large golden bear footprint on golf course architecture around the world."



— Golf course architect Rees Jones, presenting the American Society of Golf Course Architects' Donald Ross Award to Jack Nicklaus in May.

"I asked him the most important question that I think you could ask — if he had ever seen *Caddyshack*."

— Minnesota Gov. Jesse Ventura on his recent meeting with the Dalai Lama (WCCO Radio, Minneapolis)

No Course Is An Island



RUSS ANDORKA

As the remnants of Tropical Storm Allison dropped 36 inches of water on Houston, the Island Course (an appropriate name, under the circumstances) at Kingwood CC in Kingwood, Texas (a Houston suburb), found itself under water.

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Business briefs

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Lesco sales optimistic

Cleveland-based Lesco anticipates a 10 percent to 12 percent increase in sales in the second quarter over the 2000 level of \$158.3 million and a modest increase in second quarter 2001 earnings compared to the \$10 million net reported in last year's second quarter. The company says it will report higher earnings for the full year compared with 2000.

Tee-2-Green, Turf-Seed Announce Joint Venture

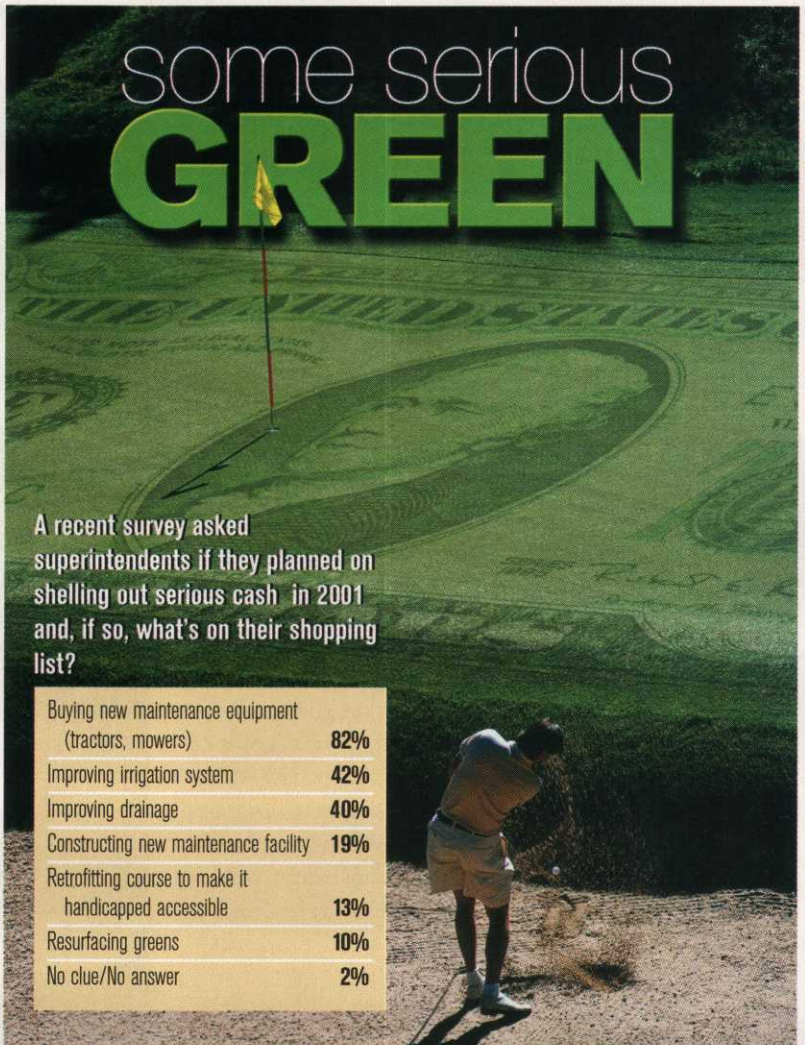
Hubbard, Ore.-based Turf-Seed was assigned marketing rights for Penn A-1 creeping bentgrass by Tee-2-Green.

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I spent three hours in the interview. I took the committee on the course and showed them the problem areas and told them how to correct them. I convinced them they needed to buy new equipment, raise the budget, pay me more than they were offering and have confidence in my ability. I got the job. Mr. GQ was unemployed for two years.

My experiences (slightly embellished) prove that knowledge, skills and ability will get you further than appearance. Your appearance enhances your image, but you shouldn't try to be someone you're not. I'm a strong believer that my employer not only likes me for my ability, but also for who I am. If wearing a suit and tie fits your personality, do it. If you think wearing a suit will make people look at you as more professional, you and I will disagree.

Mike Hamilton, certified superintendent at Foxfire CC in Naples, Fla., prefers to work in Hawaiian shirts and shorts. To receive a longer version of Hamilton's essay, contact him at mikeham@mindspring.com.



some serious GREEN

A recent survey asked superintendents if they planned on shelling out serious cash in 2001 and, if so, what's on their shopping list?

Buying new maintenance equipment (tractors, mowers)	82%
Improving irrigation system	42%
Improving drainage	40%
Constructing new maintenance facility	19%
Retrofitting course to make it handicapped accessible	13%
Resurfacing greens	10%
No clue/No answer	2%

SOURCE: GCSAA
ILLUSTRATION: DAN BEEDEY

Golfdom Partners With ASIC

The American Society of Irrigation Consultants (ASIC) has selected *Golfdom* magazine as the professional organization's "Official Publication" for the golf industry.

According to *Golfdom*'s publisher/editorial director Pat Jones, ASIC will work in partnership with *Golfdom* and its sister publications, *Landscape Management* and *Athletic Turf*, to "ensure that we offer superintendents and other readers the finest possible coverage" of irrigation issues. "Effective irrigation design and performance is probably the most critical issue faced by golf courses in this country," Jones said. "We're thrilled that we now have the expertise of ASIC's membership on our side."

ASIC President Brian Vinchesi said the relationship will "allow us to reach out to superintendents, architects, owners and others and build an appreciation for the critical role that professional irrigation consultants play in the success of a golf course construction or remodeling project."

To learn more about ASIC or find a consultant in your area, visit www ASIC.org.

The Pundits Speak: Casey Martin

In May, the Supreme Court ruled that disabled golfer Casey Martin has the legal right to ride in a golf car during PGA play. Here's what the nation's sports columnists said about the ruling:

John Eisenberg, *The Baltimore Sun* — The PGA Tour's motives weren't as terrible as they appeared, but it got what it deserved in the end: a legal loss amounting to a flogging in the court of public relations. Next time, the guys in the PGA office will have a heart.

David Whitley, *The Orlando Sentinel* — Sports are by nature discriminatory. The fastest and strongest win. The weak and injured don't. Except in America, where they sue. ... Bill Glas-son has had 10 surgeries on various ailments and almost filed for permanent disability because of back problems. Scott Verplank struggles through every round with an insulin pump. Isn't diabetes a handicap? Should we be less

sympathetic to a golfer with a slipped disc than a circulatory problem?

Gerry Callahan, *The Boston Herald* — Most of the top tour players — including Tiger and Phil Mickelson and David Duval — were children of privilege who were playing the finest private courses when most of us were begging Dad to stop for a round of mini golf. It is an image the PGA Tour executives would love to shake, and Martin hasn't helped the cause. Maybe that's why they fear him so and treat him as if he scratched their courtesy cars. ... [Martin] would love to walk. He can't. But he can play now, and it doesn't matter if he ever wins again. He took on the entire PGA Tour and won, and it wasn't even close. Way to go, Casey. You the man — the bigger, better man.

Terry Pluto, *The Akron Beacon Journal* — Judge Stevens, did you ever play golf? Did you ever have to walk a hilly course in the middle of August when

the humidity is high and the temperature is over 90 degrees? That nearly six-mile walk in those conditions will make you tired, period. And if you're competing against someone in a cart, who will have the advantage?

Bill Plaschke, *The Los Angeles Times* — It's not enough the PGA Tour has just been ruled out of bounds. It should also now be penalized for slow play. For taking nearly four years to do what it could have done in four minutes. For turning Casey Martin's last four years into a ride through hell. ... We should not forget that [the PGA] treated him like mud on a Titleist.

Bud Shaw, *The (Cleveland) Plain Dealer* — Golf is a game of honor. It's ridiculous to suggest that golfers with chronic bad backs or other physical ailments will suddenly take advantage of Casey Martin's victory in the Supreme Court to petition the PGA to ride in a car.



Scanning the Web

Frank Andorka reviews www.drkoop.com

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

www.drkoop.com — Former U.S. Surgeon General C. Everett Koop lends his name to this online clearinghouse for general health information. Its front page allows you to scan the latest health-news headlines. Since I currently suffer from rheumatoid arthritis and battled testicular cancer two years ago, I entered each into the site's search engine to test how in-depth the site is.

The rheumatoid arthritis search produced 11 pages of results containing 101 articles. The articles covered such varied topics as using yoga to lessen the symptoms to the latest drug therapies (although it took me a while to find any pages on Arava, the wonder drug that

has allowed me to walk normally again).

My search for testicular cancer produced only one page of articles (10 in all) on the subject. It included only basic information, and the articles didn't discuss treatment options in any depth. Still, it wouldn't be a bad place to start, and the site provides links to other medical Web sites that may provide you with more in-depth information.

You can also check potential drug interactions. The "Drug Checker" feature compares the medications you designate to see if they react adversely when used together. You can also discover other substances (such as alcohol or over-the-counter drugs) that you shouldn't use while

on a medication. As someone on multiple medications, I found this section invaluable. (My medications checked out fine.)

But my favorite part of the site was the risk-factor calculators, which allows you to calculate your ideal weight, your risk of chronic heart disease and whether you're getting enough sleep (among other subjects). In all, www.drkoop.com is an outstanding site that provides health information in language easily accessible to the lay person.

Golfdom's associate editor Frank H. Andorka Jr. compiles Scanning the Web and spends more money on arthritis medication each year than Augusta spends on azaleas. You can reach him at fandorka@advanstar.com with future column suggestions or sites you think he should visit.