

A Challenging Year

Economics and agronomics. Those are the two key issues that come to mind when we think of the industry in 2002

The difficult economy continues to be an integral issue in the golf course industry. We said the same thing about a year ago, but we (along with many financial analysts) expected things to shake out by now. They haven't, and many golf courses continue to pay the price for slow business.

In the first story (page 4A) comprising our third annual *Golfdom Report*, we asked superintendents from around the country how their courses are performing financially and what they expect fiscally in 2003. We also asked the heavy hitters on the manufacturing side how the sour economy is affecting their businesses.

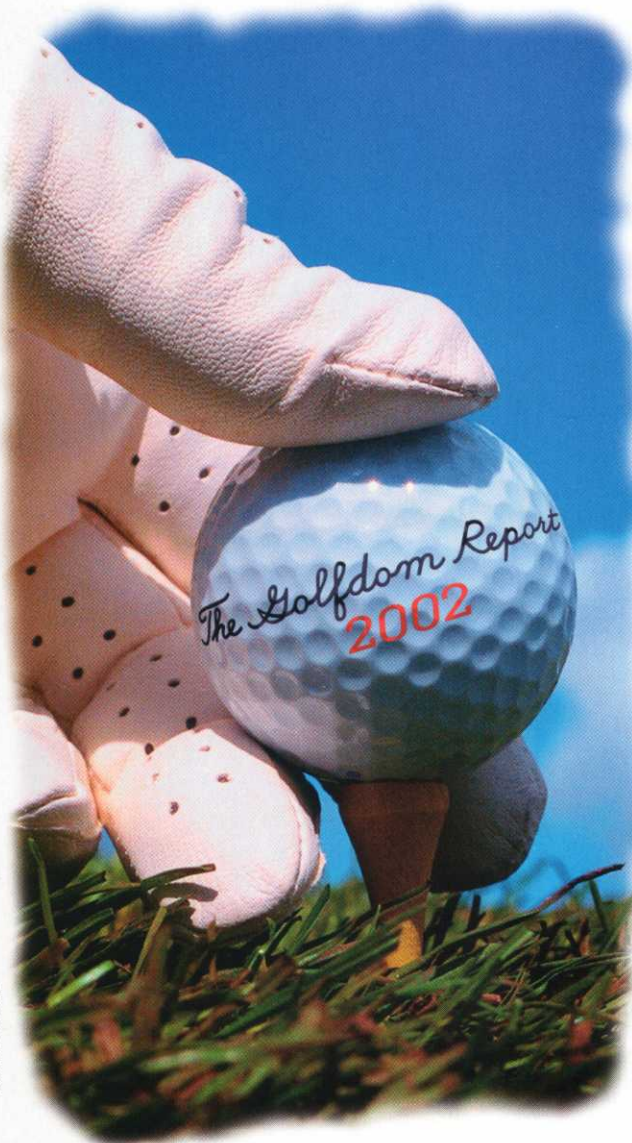
The year in turf management proved to be a year of heartache for many superintendents throughout the country because of the nation's extreme weather, most notably a drought that affected nearly 50 percent of the country. We heard many superintendents say that 2002 was the most challenging year they've ever had tending turf because of difficulties brought on by drought, high humidity and even too much rain.

In the second story in our report (page 12A), we interviewed superintendents from across the country to find out what turf-management challenges they faced, how they dealt with them and, most importantly, what they learned from them.

Both stories feature informational charts garnered from our recent superintendent survey.

Speaking of that survey, the third story comprising our report (page 20A) focuses on information gathered from it. In September, we polled superintendents on a plethora of issues, from job challenges to job security. We report on those findings with superintendents' comments.

— Larry Aylward, Editor



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