

Off The Fringe

NEWS WITH A HOOK

Business briefs

FTC approves Bayer acquisition

In May, the Federal Trade Commission approved Bayer AG's acquisition of Aventis CropScience subject to certain conditions. Clearance had already been given by the European Commission in April.

The FTC's approval is conditional upon the divestment or outlicensing of a number of products marketed in the United States, including the insecticide fipronil. The global business in fipronil for agricultural uses must be divested. Bayer may market the product for nonagricultural uses through a co-exclusive license, except in Europe. The FTC also requires that Bayer divest the insecticide acetamiprid in Europe and North America.

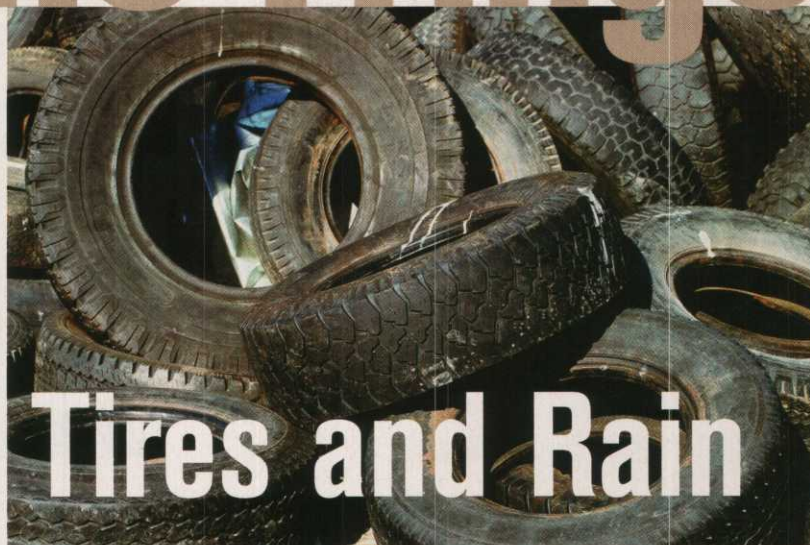
"We're glad that closing — the actual transfer of the business — can now take place soon," said Jochen Wulff, designated Management Board Chairman of Bayer CropScience. "The important thing now is to quickly and efficiently integrate the ACS operations with Bayer's crop protection business and to foster employee and customer awareness of our new corporate identity as Bayer CropScience."

MicroBio assumes Becker Underwood name

Becker Underwood says the Canada and United Kingdom-based MicroBio Group, which it acquired in 2000, has assumed the Becker Underwood name and its global brand-positioning program. "We've been working to function as a singular global company since the acquisition took place," said Becker Underwood President Peter Innes.

Yamaha opens new plant

Yamaha Golf-Car Co. opened its new state-of-the-art golf car and utility vehicle manu-
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Tires and Rain

EYEWIRE

INVENTOR HOPED 'IRRIGATION SYSTEM' WOULD TAKE THE INDUSTRY BY STORM, BUT SO FAR HIS IDEA IS A WASHOUT

By Bruce Allar

You know the old saying, "Build a better mousetrap, and the world will beat a path to your door." Well, Bob Hendershot of

Sarasota, Fla., built what he thought was a better "rain trap," and the golf world beat a path to the exits, he says.

"We've kind of given up on it," Hendershot says of his Rain Trap System, patented seven years ago. "It's an excellent idea, but the resistance is too strong. Nobody wants to be the first [to try it]."

"The first," in this case, means a superintendent who's willing to place old tires under his golf course's fairways and roughs. Henderson's Rain Trap System features used tires cut in half-bagel style that are laid flat-side down in rows 15 inches under the grass surface where they capture and retain rainwater — or excess irrigation — that's normally lost to plants as it percolates deeper into the soil. The water that pools in those bi-

sected Goodyears, according to Hendershot, represents nearly five days of additional water supply within capillary distance of grass roots.

The water trapped in the tires is above the water table and can't run underground. The water is close to the surface so it's available to the soil and the grass roots that pull moisture from the tires through capillary action. The water level in the tires goes down as it's drawn up to the roots between rains.

Hendershot claims the Rain Trap System can save an average-size golf course of 150 acres about 60 million gallons of pumped water a year.

A proponent of the Rain Trap, Stuart A. Hoenig, a professor in the Department of Agricultural and Biosystems Engineering at the University of Arizona, says the cost of tire-trapping a golf course would be about \$4,500 an acre.

"I tried the Rain Trap System on campus in a grassy area and it cut water use by 50 percent to 60 per-

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cent,” he says, noting that no golf courses in the area have tried the system despite the fact that it’s a region short on water.

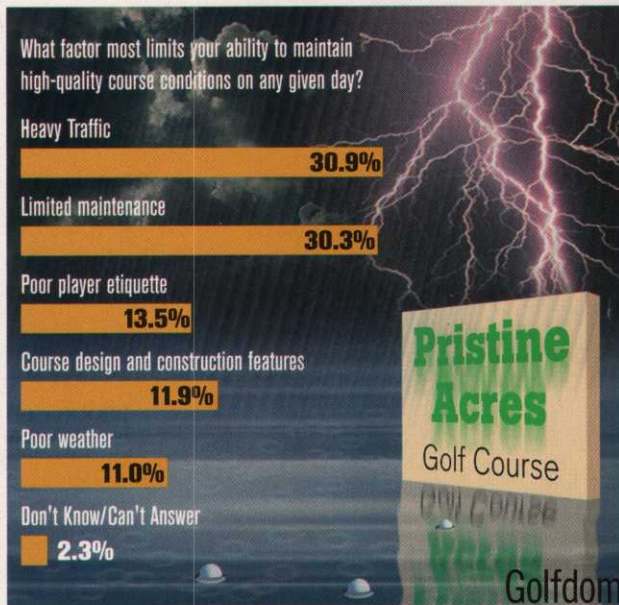
Hendershot says he’s placed test sites in Texas, California, South Carolina and Canada with positive results. He has interested a few designers in the concept, only to hear the brakes squeal on the project as soon as public officials or owners hear that used tires might be under the turf. “We just can’t get people to put tires in a golf course,” he says.

According to Hoenig, the Army Corps of Engineers, the Department of the Interior and several states have approved old tires for uses in and out of water. Problems with leached contamination from tires, he says, appear to be limited to those that have been pulled from landfills

where they pick up pollutants. Hoenig would like to see the Arizona state legislature pressure the golf industry to reduce water consumption, forcing ideas like Rain Trap to get more serious consideration.

More than 1 million tires would be re-used on an average golf course, according to Hendershot. That would be another blessing because about 250 million tires are scrapped each year in the United States, with 60 percent of them winding up in stockpiles or landfills.

Another expected benefit from Rain Trap: less fertilizer and pesticide use. Each half-tire holds a half-gallon of water, and some chemicals would be with the water, allowing less to be lost to ground water. Theoretically, applications could be cut back, saving money and reducing the environmental



SOURCE: GCSAA
ILLUSTRATION: DAN BEEDY

impact. It all sounds good on paper, but try getting it in the ground. Try selling it to golf course developers who have a hard time visualizing used tires planted under their pristine fairways — and explaining the procedure to meticulous golfers. The 72-year-old Hen-

dershot says he’s grown weary of spinning his wheels with Rain Trap.

“I’ve almost gone broke trying to do this,” he says. “I can’t afford the expense anymore.”

Allar is a free-lance writer from Floyds Knobs, Ind.

Quotable

“It seems like every new golf book I read, somebody’s walking around a course in the fog and they bump into Walter Hagen.”

— Dan Jenkins, noted golf writer, regarding the recent glut of golf book releases (*Golfworld*).

“An athleticism at odds with golf’s ‘fat guys in carts’ image made Snead seem younger than his years.”

— Cleveland Plain Dealer sports columnist Bill Livingston in a tribute to Sam Snead, who died at 89 in May.

“I go by smell. When I’m golfing around the greens, I can smell when there’s a potential fungus problem. It smells like raw potatoes. Nobody else can smell it, but I can for some crazy reason.”

— John Monson, superintendent of the Long Prairie (Minn.) CC, on his fungicide detection method, called “Follow Your Nose.”

“Grasses are better, the machinery they’re cutting with is better and superintendents are better. Conditions everywhere we play are phenomenal.”

— Golfer Greg Norman giving credit where he feels credit his due (*Jacksonville Times-Union*).

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facturing facility in June. "We see this expansion as not only an expansion of employees and facilities. We see this as an expansion of customer commitment," said Bill Szarowicz, the company's vice-president.

Institute hopes to open facility

The California Water Institute, an irrigation research facility at Fresno (Calif.) State University, announced it hopes to open an International Center for Water Technology by 2006. The institute would be a consortium of researchers at three state universities in the San Joaquin Valley in California that would focus on researching improvements in irrigation for agricultural, municipal and commercial uses, including golf courses and landscaping.

Toro beats estimates

Bloomington, Minn.-based The Toro Co. said its net second-quarter earnings beat its previous estimates and allowed the company to revise its full-year estimate upward.

Excluding a one-time tax benefit, Toro reported an 11.6-percent increase per share of \$36.4 million or \$2.78 per dilutive share compared to \$32.9 million or \$2.49 per dilutive share. Net sales increased 2.3 percent compared to last year and 1.1 percent compared to the first half of 2001.

Deere's profit jump

Moline, Ill.-based Deere & Co. reported an 11-percent increase in its worldwide net income for its second quarter ended April 30. Net income was \$141.8 million or \$.59 per share compared to \$103.6 million or \$.43 per share last year. Still, the company predicted flat results for the year.

Report urges nitrogen, phosphorous reduction

A National Academy of Sciences' National Research Council report urges the federal government to reduce nitrogen and phosphorous pollution in the nation's waters by at least 25 percent in the next 25 years. From 1960 to 1990, nitrogen content doubled with fertilizer use accounting for more than 50 percent of the increase, the report stated.



ASSOCIATED PRESS

The Jack Collection

MUSEUM CELEBRATES GOLDEN BEAR'S MYRIAD ACHIEVEMENTS

By Larry Aylward, Editor

You know you've made it when they build a museum in your honor. Well, Jack Nicklaus, winner of 100 golf tournaments around the world (including 18 Majors), "made it" a long time ago. But now the greatest golfer ever (until Tiger or anyone else unseats him) has a building with more hardware than a Home Depot to celebrate his feats.

Nicklaus officially cut the ribbon on the Jack Nicklaus Museum on May 20. The museum is located, appropriately, on The Ohio State University campus in Columbus, Ohio. The Golden Bear, of course, was born and raised in Columbus and shined as a collegiate golfer at Ohio State.

During the private grand-opening celebration of the museum, Nicklaus said he was humbled by the bricks and mortar that housed everything from his birth certificate to a green jacket for winning one of his record six Masters.

"It's one thing to play a game and maybe think you did pretty well at

(Above) Jack Nicklaus scans a few of the many trophies he has won during his illustrious career at the museum in his honor.

it," the 62-year-old Nicklaus said. "But to stand in front of a building that represents everything that happened to you through the years and is going to be here a long time beyond my golf game and my lifetime is something pretty special."

It's downright scary how many trophies, plaques and ribbons Nicklaus has won for playing golf like few people can. He joked that there's nothing left to display in his house. But there's no way all the hardware could fit in his house. "I'm lucky that my mother and wife are pack rats," he said.

The trophies include Nicklaus' first for winning the Scioto Club Juvenile Tournament when he was 10 and his last Major title for winning the 1986 Masters when he was 46.

Of course, there's a ton of brass
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and silver in between those awards, as well as the green jacket.

Nicklaus said he was surprised to see the jacket in the museum because the green jackets aren't allowed to leave that mecca in Augusta, Ga. "I don't know how it got here, but there's a green jacket in the museum," Nicklaus told attendees.

While the museum features several wings, including the Masters room, the Nicklaus family room and the Nicklaus Design room, it doesn't include a space for sportsmanship. Most all of the speakers attending the museum's christening spoke of Nicklaus' ability to be a good sport.

"He's the greatest loser I've ever seen," Gary Player said. "A great football coach once said, 'Show me a good loser, and I'll show you a non-winner.' Well, I beg to differ. It's so easy to be a good winner, but it takes courage and grace to be a good loser."

PGA Commissioner Tim Finchem said Nicklaus is golf's ultimate role model for conduct on the course.

"Every time he has set foot on the golf course over the last 40 years, he has conducted himself every minute of that time in a way that you would want players to conduct themselves," Finchem said. "That's why so many players look to Jack as a role model."

Former LPGA Commissioner Charlie Mechem Jr. borrowed a line from Tiger Woods' to describe Nicklaus. "Tiger called him a champion's champion." Then Mechem added, "No one has ever or will ever bring to the game a greater combination of skill, dignity, professionalism or sportsmanship than the Golden Bear."

To celebrate the opening of the museum, Nicklaus went out a few days later and shot a one-under-par 71 on the opening day of his tournament, the Memorial Tournament, held at nearby Muirfield Village GC, the outstanding track he designed nearly 30 years ago. It was the first time Nicklaus broke par at the tournament in five years.

He can still play. But is there room left in the museum for more trophies?

Architects Have Wide Worries

Golf course architects have protested about the increased length of golf courses. Now they're protesting about courses' increased widths, too.

Architects say the "long ball" is the problem. They may go farther, but high-tech balls that are poorly hit also go farther off-line. That's what architects say they must contend with in new designs.

The American Society of Golf Course Architects projects that at least 20 percent more space is now required to design golf courses to accommodate today's high-tech equipment and balls. The more space, the more maintenance for superintendents.

"The consensus is that most architects are now designing fairway corridors 50 yards wider than they did just a decade ago to provide the space necessary to contain today's off-line balls," says Jay Morrish, president of ASGCA.



Scanning the Web

Frank Andorka reviews www.ivillage.com

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

You can read all the stories you want about making your relationship with your spouse or significant other work, but we all know where you can find the real scoop: an Internet love compatibility survey.

At ivillage.com, they have a section called Love Compatibility that links to a three-page, 15-question survey that allows you and your partner to determine whether you'll be together forever or are destined for the rocks. (Husbands: Don't be put off by the fact that ivillage.com is part of "The Women's Network." After all, it is the 21st century and we're all supposed to connect with our feminine side.)

The compatibility survey covers three important areas of a relationship: atti-

tudes toward romance, sex and communication. (The questions get a little personal, so if you're easily embarrassed, this site is not for you.)

The survey is designed so that you and your significant other can fill it out together or separately. Then you submit your answers for what I'm sure is a completely scientific analysis of them to determine your compatibility.

The analysis is pretty detailed, and I found it described my personality pretty well. How accurately they describe my wife is a question because I filled out both of our surveys since my wife doesn't work with me. After seven years of marriage, I have a pretty good handle on how she'd answer the questions (I think).



Embedded within the detailed compatibility results are other links that led to other surveys on the site or articles that could help you improve any aspect of your relationship that you believe needs work.

Golfdom's managing editor Frank H. Andorka Jr. compiles Scanning the Web with the support of his wife, Beth, with whom he is completely compatible. You can reach him at fandorka@advanstar.com with future column suggestions or sites you think he should visit.