

Off The Fringe

Business briefs

Simplot disputes L-93 ruling

J.R. Simplot is disputing the U.S. Department of Agriculture's decision to abandon the Plant Variety Protection application of Loft L-93 bentgrass, marketed by the company's Jacklin Seed division.

The ruling, handed down by USDA's Plant Variety Protection office, means the cultivar has no proprietary owner and that generic versions of L-93 could be sold.

J.R. Simplot purchased the seed at a bankruptcy auction after the demise of AgroBioTech in 2000, but Simplot didn't obtain a new PVP, which is required when a variety changes hands.

"Simplot is aggressively pursuing all available avenues to restore the PVP application for L-93," the company announced in a media advisory. "Ultimately, Simplot believes the PVP office will reconsider its decision and reinstate the application."

NGP, AGC announce merger conditions

National Golf Properties and American Golf Corp., both based in Santa Monica, Calif., have announced conditions of their merger, which they reported in February. Under the merger, both companies would become subsidiaries of a new holding company that would be owned by current National Golf shareholders.

The new company would also not be a real-estate investment trust as National Golf was previously. The company plans a new name upon completion of the merger, which is expected late this summer.

Ruling doesn't affect golf industry

While the California Department of Pesticide Regulation (DPR) announced it wants to ban

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Embracing the 'Enemy'

SPEAKERS URGE COLLEAGUES TO USE GROUPS' EXPERTISE

By Frank H. Andorka Jr.,
Managing Editor

The words sent palpable shock waves through the conference room.

Two superintendents, appearing at a seminar on environmental success stories during February's GCSAA show, uttered words their colleagues never expected to hear about their ongoing battle with environmentalists: Embrace the "enemy."

Actually, Peter Lund and Ray Davies don't view environmentalists as the enemy at all — far from it. Lund, certified superintendent of Rhode Island CC in Barrington, R.I., said superintendents should embrace environmentalists because they have access to sufficient resources to

solve potential problems. Davies, a former superintendent who's now director of golf course maintenance and construction for CourseCo, a Petaluma, Calif.-based management company, says the environmentalists have access to government leaders in ways a superintendent will never achieve.

"These guys are the experts who know how to lobby governments, and they have the contacts," Davies said. "When you involve them in the process, you'd be amazed at how much they will help you accomplish."



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RAY DAVIES,
COURSECO

Lund said environmentalists understand the complex web of government agencies that may have jurisdiction over projects and can help superintendents navigate those agencies.

"Engage the environmentalists and get them to contact the appropriate agencies on your behalf," Lund said. "They know which levers to flip, and they don't go away. They'll stay in the politicians' faces as long as necessary to accomplish their goals."



PHOTO COURTESY OF COLLIER'S RESERVE

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15 products containing the broadleaf herbicide clopyralid for use on lawns in California, the state's golf course industry is not expecting an impact from the ruling.

Clopyralid accumulates in lawn clippings often used in compost. Accumulation of clopyralid in compost can damage some vegetables, according to the DPR.

But Steve McVey, president of the Southern California GCSA and superintendent of Virginia CC in Long Beach, said it's not a big issue for superintendents in California because most of them don't pick up clippings in roughs and fairways where clopyralid would be used. "This is more of a home owners' issue," McVey said.

Lesco's Foley resigns; DiMino becomes CEO

Lesco's board of directors accepted William A. Foley's resignation as chairman and CEO. The board promoted Michael P. DiMino, previously president and chief operating officer, to president and CEO. J. Martin Erbaugh was elected chairman. DiMino joined the company last December.

Bayer close to acquisition

At press time, Bayer AG submitted its proposal to acquire Aventis CropScience for \$6.4 billion and expected a decision by April 22. The head of Bayer's Crop Protection unit, Jochen Wulff, told Reuters he expects U.S. regulators to grant approval around the same time.

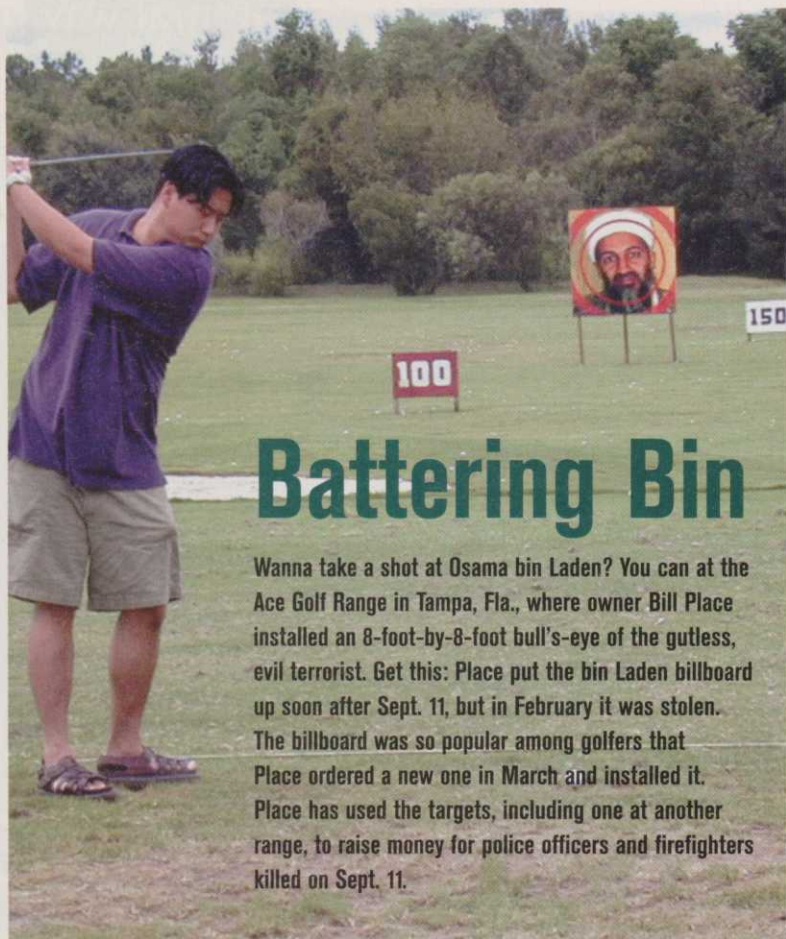
The acquisition will move Bayer from No. 7 to No. 2 in the \$30 billion-a-year agrochemicals market behind Swiss-based Syngenta AG.

Deere closes Illinois plant

Moline, Ill.-based Deere & Co. will close its Phoenix International facility in Springfield, Ill., later this year.

The company will consolidate some of its operations with its plant in Fargo, N.D. Deere cited economic conditions and a need to decrease the overall cost of doing business.

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Battering Bin

Wanna take a shot at Osama bin Laden? You can at the Ace Golf Range in Tampa, Fla., where owner Bill Place installed an 8-foot-by-8-foot bull's-eye of the gutless, evil terrorist. Get this: Place put the bin Laden billboard up soon after Sept. 11, but in February it was stolen. The billboard was so popular among golfers that Place ordered a new one in March and installed it. Place has used the targets, including one at another range, to raise money for police officers and firefighters killed on Sept. 11.

PHOTO BY BILL PLACE

We Asked Superintendents:

What words of advice would you give a young person considering a career as a superintendent?

"Be committed to education and be patient during your climb from staff member to superintendent. Work on your communication skills to all age groups, especially older adults who we normally have as customers, members and supervisors."
— Kyle D. Sweet, Superintendent
The Sanctuary GC,
Sanibel Island, Fla.

"Work hard and good things will happen. But when you have reached what you think is the pinnacle of your career [at a club], start looking for another opportunity. You peak at your club when things are going great. Then you

can only go one way and that is down. Sounds cynical, but I've seen it happen."
— Bob DiRico,
Certified Superintendent
Brae Burn CC,
West Newton, Mass.

"The question is: What do you want out of life? For me, I figure I'll work until I'm at least 65. In this business, I can wake up and look forward to going to work every day. But it's not for everyone."
— W. Craig Weyandt,
Superintendent
The Moorings Club,
Vero Beach, Fla.

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ServiScape reacquired from TruGreen-LandCare

ServiScape LLC announces its reacquisition from the TruGreen-LandCare Division of The ServiceMaster Co. "We're very pleased the TruGreen-LandCare management chose to sell the operation back to us, and we're very enthused about our future," said Peter Sinnott, founder and president of Serviscape.

Syngenta launches GreenCast

Syngenta Professional Products has launched GreenCast, an online resource to help superintendents better manage their operations. The Web site features up-to-the-minute information on weather, insect and disease pressure, and other matters. For more information, contact greencastonline.com.

Superintendents can get in the pit

Superintendents who demo a Club Car Carryall turf utility vehicle before May 24 could become an honorary NASCAR Winston Cup pit crew member. Four superintendents will be chosen in random drawings to watch a race from pit row as honorary crew members with the Hendrick Motorsports NASCAR Winston Cup team. Superintendents can request a demo by calling 800-ClubCar or by visiting www.clubcar.com.

Charwood named course of year

The South Carolina Golf Course Owners Association named Charwood CC as South Carolina's Golf Course of the Year in 2002. Charwood is a 27-hole semi-private club.

Flowtronex restructures division

Flowtronex says it has restructured its golf division and created several new divisions to meet the growing demand for its modular pumping systems and services.

Dakota completes plant expansion

East Grand Forks, Minn.-based Dakota Peat & Equipment completed expansion of its production facility in East Grand Forks, Minn. The new 80,000-square-foot building will quadruple the company's production capability.



...and the envelope, please

You don't need a beautiful mind to figure out which of this year's Majors have earned "Lord of the Links" status among superintendents.

SOURCE: GCSAA
ILLUSTRATION: DAN BEEDY

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