

Business briefs

Briefs continued from page 14

partners and employee partners when I say we have lost an inspirational leader, a caring mentor and a devoted friend," Robert Dedman Jr. said of his father.

Jack Nicklaus said Robert Dedman "truly was a visionary."

"It was my honor and privilege to know him, learn from him and be associated with ClubCorp," Nicklaus said. "The world of golf has lost a legend."

Dedman Jr. has assumed the additional title of chairman. Nancy Dedman, widow of the founder, has been added to the board.

In other ClubCorp news, the company named John A. Beckert as president and chief operating officer. Beckert, 49, also joins the company's board of directors.

Beckert, 49, is responsible for all aspects of ClubCorp's domestic and international operations. He replaces Jim Hinckley, who resigned in July.

Environmental Industries changes name to ValleyCrest Cos.

Calabasas, Calif.-based Environmental Industries has changed its name to ValleyCrest Cos. The ValleyCrest name will be used by the parent company and all its business units to unify under one brand a comprehensive and integrated portfolio of landscape services. Environmental Golf, the nation's pre-eminent provider of golf course maintenance services, will become ValleyCrest Golf Course Maintenance.

"The driving force for the re-branding is to simplify the way customers view us and to better communicate the scope of the company's services," said Richard A. Sperber, president and chief operating officer of ValleyCrest.

Toro earnings up

Bloomington, Minn.-based The Toro Co. reported net earnings of \$21.9 million or \$1.68 per diluted share on net sales of \$375.6 million for its fiscal third quarter ended Aug. 2.

In the comparable fiscal 2001 period, the company reported net earnings of \$16.9 million or \$1.30 per diluted share on net sales of \$329.7 million.

LaPlante Wins John Deere Challenge

Tony LaPlante, superintendent of Kennebec Heights CC in Farmingdale, Maine, is the winner of John Deere and *Golfdom's* Major Challenge, the online fantasy golf competition for superintendents and other turf professionals. LaPlante, who finished six-under par, won an all-expense paid for two to the John Deere Team Championship in November at Grayhawk GC in Scottsdale, Ariz.

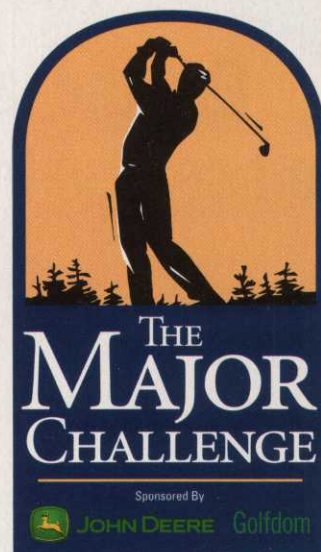
LaPlante edged Jim Knaffle, superintendent of the International Club in Murrells Inlet, S.C., and Stephen Cohoon, certified superintendent of Heritage Hunt Golf and CC in Gainesville, Va., who finished tied for second at two-under par.

Rounding out the top 10 are:

4. Brad Wolff, retired superintendent in Calgary, Alberta — Even.
5. Pat Cowan, sports turf manager in Birch Ridge GC, Soldotna, Alaska — five-over par.
6. Dan Wollner, superintendent, Lake Panorama National in Panorama, Iowa — 11-over par.
6. Ernie Miller, superintendent, Recreation Center of SCW in Sun City West, Ariz. — 11-over par.
6. Ian Cameron, technician, Alberta Springs Golf Resort in Red Deer, Alberta — 11-over par.
9. Don Ewoldt, director of golf course maintenance operations, Lake Erie Land Co. in Chesterton, Ind. — 13-over par.
9. Shannon Wheeler, horticulturist, The Peninsula Club in Cornelius, N.C. — 13-over par.
9. Steve Merkel, agronomist, Landscapes Unlimited in Lincoln, Neb. — 13-over par.
9. Scott Smith, superintendent, Little Ocmulgee GC in McRae, Ga. — 13-over par.

The second- through 25th-place finishers received John Deere golf travel bags from Club Glove.

More than 200 top finishers who "beat the bosses" — Deere's Greg Brenningmeyer and *Golfdom's* Pat Jones — received hats commemorating their victories.



Get the Inside Information

October marks the debut of *Golfdom's* new e-newsletter, *The Insider*, which provides up-to-date news and other features, including *Digital Flagstick* by Pat Jones, *Training Tips*, *Working the Web* and more. *The Insider* is sponsored by Standard Golf. For more information and to sign up to receive *The Insider* free of charge, log onto www.golfdom.com.