

Show Business

We came, we saw and we conquered.
Now we're filing our report on what went down
during the Big Show in Atlanta

BY THE GOLFDOM STAFF



Editor's note: Thankfully, Hotlanta wasn't cold. You just don't know what you're gonna get, weather-wise, in February in Atlanta. Despite a lousy economy and low attendance, we had a good time at the show. We suspect most everyone did. (But we have a feeling the GCSAA

won't be back to the city anytime soon — if ever.) Here's our report:

Pistol Pete

The show's last day may have included its best seminar, "Current Issues in Golf: Preparation for Major Golf Events," which featured architect Pete Dye; golf instructor Dave Pelz; superintendent Paul Latshaw Jr. of Oak Hill CC in Rochester, N.Y., site of this year's PGA Championship; and superintendent Dave Ward of Olympia Fields (Ill.) CC, site of this year's U.S. Open.

Dye, who received the GCSAA's Old Tom Morris Award, showed no signs that he was recovering from recent colon cancer surgery. The 77-year-old was as spunky as ever, especially when talking about new golf balls. Take it away, Pete:

"The ball is going further for the good player, but it's not going an inch further for Maple Smith, who tees off on Tuesday morning and hits the ball 135 yards. Martha Burk ought to yell at the golf course manufacturers who are discriminating against all those women who play your golf courses. She should quit wor-



Pete Dye (right) appeared as spunky as ever during a "Current Issues in Golf" seminar, which also featured superintendent Paul Latshaw Jr.

rying about getting someone in Augusta. Hootie's made a mess of that anyhow."

Girls Talk

How can women turf professionals effectively contribute to their own career success and to the success of other women in the field? And what kinds of

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Payin' Your Dues

The big show wasn't without — no big surprise here — plenty of news from the GCSAA.

As expected, voters passed a \$50 increase to bump GCSAA dues to \$300 next year. GCSAA CEO Steve Mona said the increase will garner an additional \$800,000 in annual revenue.

Speaking of revenue, Mona revealed to reporters during the show that the association fired its financial advisor, Salomon Smith Barney last summer. It has hired Ennis, Knupp & Associates. The GCSAA reported a bottom-line loss of \$802,000 last year.

Mona expects Ennis, Knupp & Associates to take a more hands-on approach with GCSAA's investments and to be more involved with its investment strategy — something Salomon Smith Barney didn't do it, said new GCSAA president Jon Maddern, certified superintendent of Elk Ridge GC in Atlanta, Mich.

Overall attendance for the show was 18,164, down from 20,613 visitors last year in Orlando. A total of 701 exhibitors covered 245,200 square feet of floor space in Atlanta, down from 729 exhibitors who covered 273,200 square feet in Orlando.

But an upbeat Mona found a silver lining in the attendance, even though it was down. He said the 6,045 buyers this year was about equal to last year's attendance of buyers, which was important to exhibitors.

Mona sounded upbeat about the handful of cities the GCSAA will attend in the next several years. He expects attendance to increase next year in San Diego and the following year in Orlando.

The GCSAA and the National Golf Course Owners Association also made it official that they will combine their trade shows beginning in 2005 in Orlando.

GCSAA Show Quotables

"Somehow there's this feeling that we've forgotten where we've come from, and we don't think about the little guys, which is totally false. Every decision we make is based on how it will affect little guys."

— Jon Maddern, new GCSAA president and certified superintendent of Elk Ridge GC in Atlanta, Mich.

"It's therapy for me. That's why I still talk about it."

— Capt. Al Haynes, keynote speaker at GCSAA's Golf General Session, on why he continues to recount the events of July 19, 1989, when the United Airlines flight he piloted crash-landed.

"Will you sell us some USGA letterhead?"

— A superintendent to a USGA agronomist during a seminar emphasizing that green committees seem to trust USGA Green Section members more than they trust their own superintendents.

"When, at 16, I informed my bewildered parents that I had decided to go to college to become a superintendent, they looked at me as if they had suddenly realized their daughter was developmentally challenged."

— Ann Weaver, certified superintendent of Capital City Golf in Sacramento, Calif., on joining the business.

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initiatives might the GCSAA undertake to facilitate that? These were the challenges laid down by moderator Andrea Bakalyar at the start of the "Women-Led Success" panel discussion.

The four women superintendents on the panel were:

- Bakalyar, superintendent of The Wee Course at Williams Creek in Knoxville, Tenn.;

- Debbie Amirault, superintendent of Mayfair Golf & CC in Edmonton, Alberta;

- Kathy Antaya, certified superintendent, formerly with the USGA Green Section's Northeast Region; and

- Ann Weaver, certified superintendent of Capital City Golf in Sacramento, Calif.

Bakalyar emphasized the importance of active networking, relating how, in an effort to feel less isolated among a nearly all-male class, she founded the student GCSAA chapter at the University of Maryland's turf program and became active in the GCSAA's national-level student committees. These activities put

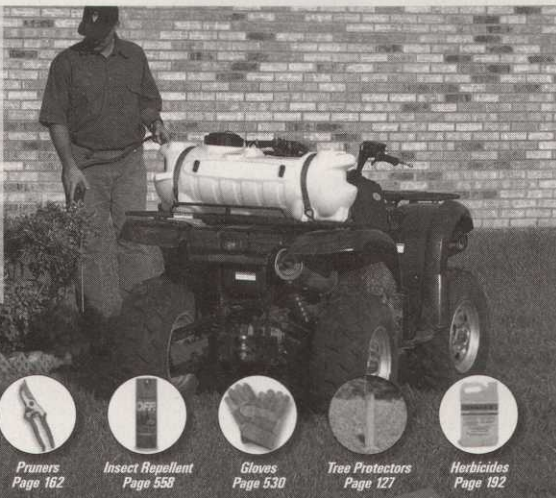
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A New Look

Karl Danneberger, Ohio State University turfgrass specialist and *Golfdom's* chief science editor, told superintendents to avoid "mechanistic" approaches to turfgrass management. "If you understand the underlying principles of turfgrass ecosystems, designing a management program is pretty simple," he said.

Danneberger's basic thrust was to avoid looking for cookbook solutions and to become more familiar with what makes the turfgrass tick. High on his list of priorities is to understand how integrated pest management works. "If you understand the underlying principles, you don't need to worry about mechanistic management," Danneberger said.

This means realizing that different solutions will (or will not) work for different varieties of grass, in shady or sunny areas of a green, at different times of the season or with different pests.

GCSAA Show

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Bakalyar in touch with many experienced professionals, including The Honors Course's David Stone, who recognized her potential and became an active mentor early in her career. Stone hired Bakalyar as an assistant superintendent and served as the image of the kind of superintendent and the kind of person Bakalyar wanted to become.

"Image goes way beyond what you wear," Bakalyar said. "Image has to do with who you are and what attitudes you've decided to adopt toward challenges."

On the Road Again

It's been a long and fruitful road for the USGA Green Section. Jim Snow, national director of the program, took attendees back to the old days during his presentation, "The Turf Advisory Service: 50 Years on the Road." Snow's presentation was part of the USGA Green Section Educational Conference.



The superintendents holding the hardware are the first recipients of *Golfdom's* Keepers of the Green awards, sponsored by Floratine Products. The gentlemen are (left to right): Fred Biggers, Kurt Thuemmel, Mike Wooten and Brian Darrock. They're flanked by Bill Byrnes, president of Floratine (far left), and Pat Jones, publisher of *Golfdom* (far right). They were honored at a Floratine reception during the show.

Things have changed, but many things have remained the same with the Green Section, Snow said. Back in the 1950s, superintendents subscribed to the Green Section's service for many of the same reasons they do today — to establish long-range plans and preventative maintenance programs; to use as a sounding board for ideas; and to provide a communication link be-

tween superintendents and course officials.

Snow also threw out some amazing statistics at the conclusion of his speech. For instance, USGA agronomists have logged more than 75,000 visits to golf courses and driven more than 16 million miles to get to courses in the past 50 years.

Here's to more visits and miles in the next 50.

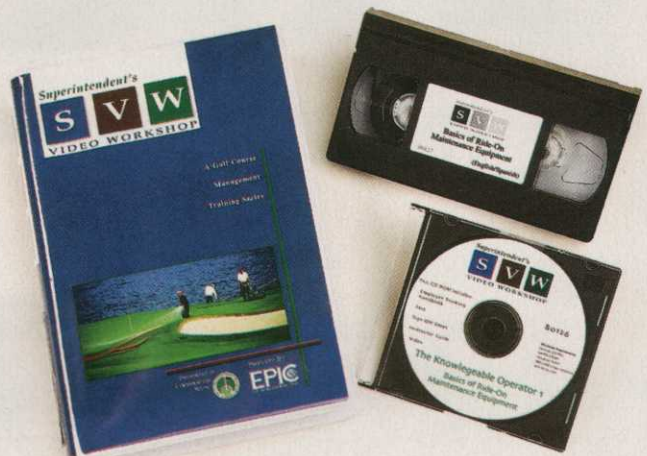
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Ambitious Audubon

Audubon International launched two new programs at its Environmental Leadership Summit held during the show, designed to grow the organization and expand its influence beyond the golf industry.

The first program is designed to get 50 percent of golf courses to sign up for Audubon International's Cooperative Sanctuary program in the next five years. The second plan even more ambitiously hopes to create Cooperative Sanctuary communities throughout the United States.

"The golf industry has an opportunity to be the leader in transforming the United States into a country that values sustainable development," said Ron Dodson, president of Audubon International. "We hope to be at the forefront of that movement."

Rock 'n Roll and Briggs & Stratton

The press room at the Georgia World Congress Center pulsated with a driving rock beat as journalists gathered before a Briggs & Stratton press conference.

"Is that Lynryd Skynyrd I hear?" one editor asked. "Actually, it's Briggs & Stratton music," Schmaderer said.

Schmaderer went on to explain that Briggs & Stratton wanted to create its own music to get the editors hopping before its press conference. Kent Lammert, another Swanson Russell associate, wrote

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Yes, that's really Dan Carrothers, vice president of Bayer Environmental Sciences' Chipco Professional Products. But is that really actor Jack Nicholson in his trademark black sunglasses standing next to Carrothers? (No) Both were on hand at Bayer's packed reception Friday night during the show.

BAYER ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCES

Resisting Dollar Spot

Michigan State University turfgrass researcher Joe Vargas says it's time the industry turns its attention to developing bentgrasses that are resistant to dollar spot. Vargas spoke at Seed Research of Oregon's annual distributor's luncheon during the show.

"Resistant bentgrasses are necessary, and we need to stop looking at just immunity," Vargas said. "We're in a critical time, and we need to get some bentgrasses that are resistant to dollar spot."

Vargas showed slides of bentgrass ridden with dollar spot. He pointed to patches of turf that seemed free of the disease while it flourished around them. He said turf experts need to study those patches that seem resistant to dollar spot.

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GCSAA Show

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the song, called *Trust the Power*, which highlighted Briggs & Stratton's marketing slogan for the new Briggs & Stratton Commercial Power Group.

Then the company hired a Lincoln, Neb.-based band called The V Twins to record the song, hoping the rock

anthem would energize the editors before they listened to the company's pitch.

Judging by the large number of heads bobbing up and down to the beat, they were successful. ■

Golfdom's Larry Aylward, Frank H. Andorka Jr., Lynne Brakeman and

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LYNNE BRAKEMAN

Face Off: Superintendent Challenges Gold Medal Grappler

By Frank H. Andorka Jr, Managing Editor

It was billed as a smackdown match between Syngenta Professional Products and 2000 Olympic Greco-Roman wrestling gold medalist Rulon Gardner. It almost ended up as a victory for certified superintendent John Fulling Jr. from Kalamazoo (Mich.) CC.

Gardner spoke at the invitation-only Syngenta get-together during the GCSAA show in Atlanta. His motivational speech emphasized the importance of perseverance and hard work. As he recounted his gold-medal winning match with the Russian wrestler (who hadn't been defeated in 13 years before Gardner beat him), he called for a volunteer from the audience so he could demonstrate his winning move. Fulling was easily the audience's choice.

Fulling, tall, muscular and bigger than Gardner, looked like he might be an Olympic wrestler himself. After engaging the superintendent in a clench and demonstrating his medal-winning move, Gardner asked the crowd if it wanted to see them wrestle for real. The crowd shouted for more.

So Fulling and Gardner faced off and clenched. As they grappled and their ties flew up in the air, Fulling got the upper hand. He clenched Gardner's white shirt so tightly he tore a hole in it, eliciting a gasp from the crowd. Could there be more in the making?

Actually, no. Fulling, in his excitement, overextended himself. Gardner, quick as a cat, extricated himself with the deft moves that made him an Olympic champion. Both men breathed heavily as they recovered from the impromptu match. A wag from the audience asked Fulling what he had done to almost get the victory.

His chest heaving, Fulling said, "When I start breathing again, I'll let you know."

The crowd erupted in laughter.