

# Off The Fringe

## Business briefs

### Long Island courses unite for the environment's sake

Long Island, N.Y., golf courses have united in an attempt to preserve the Peconic Estuary and other local waters. Challenged by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, 30 of the 34 golf courses on the east end of Long Island agreed to reduce their use of fertilizers. The voluntary pact is unprecedented among courses from one geographic area in the United States, according to the EPA.

In May 2003, EPA teamed up with the United States Golf Association (USGA), Cornell University, the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYS-DEC), the Suffolk County Health Department, the Peconic Estuary Program's Citizen's Advisory Committee and the East End Golf Course Superintendents to create the East End Nitrogen Management Challenge for Golf Courses.

"This is the first time that a large segment of the golf industry in one area has voluntarily come together to reduce fertilizer use and the nitrogen it produces to protect the future of our estuaries," said EPA Regional Administrator Jane M. Kenny. "The protection and restoration of coastal waters requires everyone to do his or her part, and the golf courses of eastern Long Island are certainly setting a laudable example."

Each participating course aims to limit its contribution of nitrogen to ground water to 2 milligrams per liter of total nitrogen — less than half the level resulting from typical residential development. To date, the courses that have agreed to participate are: Atlantic Golf Club, Bridgehampton Club Calverton Links, Cedars Golf Club, East Hampton Golf Club, Fox Hill Golf Club, Friar's Head, Gardiners Bay Country Club, Goat Hill at Shelter

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## Get In the Groove

FORMER AUGUSTA MECHANIC ADVISES ATTENDEES  
OF 'GOLFDOM' EVENT TO GET ORGANIZED

By Larry Aylward, Editor

**T**he talk was about rhythm and rhyme, but it wasn't Little Richard speaking. It was Jay Rehr, the former maintenance facility mechanic at Augusta National.

Rehr, who now operates his own consulting business, was a featured speaker at *Golfdom's* two-day Education at the EXPO, held in conjunction with the International Lawn, Garden & Power Equipment Exposition in September at the Kentucky Exposition Center in Louisville.

The 49-year-old Rehr, who worked at Augusta for more than 16 years but left last spring to begin Grovetown, Ga.-based Turf Equipment Consulting, told attendees of his seminar, "Tips and Tactics in Equipment Maintenance," how important it is to be organized in their approach to daily equipment maintenance. "The thing I try to teach people is to get into a rhyme and rhythm of your maintenance — from oil changes and greasing to lapping and grinding," Rehr said.

The street-savvy Rehr answered many listeners' questions and also offered sound advice on a variety of issues, from communication with their general managers to using food-grade grease on equipment.

It's not easy for superintendents and mechanics to convince general managers to pump money into maintenance facilities, Rehr said. "Maintenance facilities are often viewed as black holes," he added.

Rehr noted that most general managers are probably "number crunchers." Hence, superintendents and mechanics must *show* them through examples — not just verbalize to them — how they can save their golf courses money in the long-term by making investments now in certain maintenance endeavors. "[General managers] love to see formulas where you're giving money back to them," Rehr said.



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**JAY REHR**  
PRESIDENT,  
TURF EQUIPMENT  
CONSULTING

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Island Country Club, Great Rock Golf Club, Hampton Hills Golf Club, Indian Island Golf Course, Islands End Golf Club, Laurel Links Country Club, Long Island National Club, Maidstone Club, Montauk Downs, National Golf Links of America, North Fork Country Club, Noyac Golf Club, Old Vine Country Club, Pine Hills Country Club, Poxabogue Golf Course, Quogue Field Club, Rock Hill Golf Club, Sag Harbor Golf Club, Shinnecock Hills Golf Club, South Fork Country Club, The Bridge and Westhampton Country Club.

### Jake has new look

Jacobsen has undergone a facelift. The Charlotte, N.C.-based company has redesigned its logo and brand identity to reflect its corporate philosophy. Jacobsen's new slogan is, "Do more than mow." The company says the words and its updated brand identity represent the culmination of research, logo evolution and a more aggressive corporate philosophy. The initiative, spearheaded by the company's president, Jon Carlson, includes a new logo, dealer support materials, and a Web site redesign that all convey the brand's heritage and innovation in turf equipment, as well as its financial services and customer support.

### Greif joins Rain Bird

Chuck Greif is the new business development manager for Rain Bird's golf irrigation business unit. Greif joins Rain Bird after working with John Deere & Co. in various marketing, sales, and manufacturing positions. Most recently, Greif was a vice president for Alfred Karcher, USA.

### Tensar acquires N.A. Green

The Tensar Corp. of Atlanta acquired North American Green, an Evansville, Ind.-based manufacturer of rolled erosion-control products. Tensar manufactures foundation systems that provide site development soil reinforcement.

"We are excited about the opportunities being part of a larger company will create for North American Green and our distributors," said Jim Niemeier, president of North American Green.

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Rehr also stressed that maintenance facilities would be wise to switch to food-grade grease for their equipment because it won't kill turf.

Karl Danneberger, Geoff Shackelford and Joe Vargas also spoke at the event. Danneberger, professor of turfgrass science at The Ohio State University, spoke on "*Poa Annua* Management." Shackelford, a noted golf course architecture historian and author of several books and writings on the subject, talked on the "Art & Science of Bunker Design & Renovation." Vargas, a professor of plant pathology at Michigan State University, spoke on "New Disease Trends."

Danneberger, *Golfdom's* science editor, said if superintendents say they're going to manage *Poa annua*, then they need to commit wholeheartedly to doing so.

"People screw up with *Poa annua* when they know they should be maintaining it, but in the back of their minds they think they should get rid of it," he said.

Shackelford, a contributing editor and columnist for *Golfdom*, told the audience that bunker renovations shouldn't be about making golf courses more difficult. They should be about making golf courses more maintenance-friendly and attractive visually.

"The best reason to renovate bunkers is because they've become tired-looking," Shackelford added.

Vargas spoke about cultural management techniques for several turf diseases. He called crown-rotting anthracnose the "disease of the year," and told superintendents they can manage the disease mainly by not overwatering turf. He also said that low nitrogen fertility and low mowing heights contribute to crown-rotting anthracnose.

*Golfdom* Publisher Pat Jones hosted the event. Jones also gave a talk on "Career Survival Skills for Today's Superintendent."



**Low nitrogen fertility  
and low mowing heights  
contribute to crown-  
rotting anthracnose.**

**JOE VARGAS**  
PROFESSOR OF PLANT  
PATHOLOGY, MICHIGAN  
STATE UNIVERSITY

## Couch Was a Friend and Mentor to Many

In case you hadn't heard the unfortunate news, Houston Couch, professor of plant pathology at Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University in Blacksburg, Va., died in September. I won't even attempt to spell out his earthly accomplishments here, but suffice it to say that, nearing his 80th year, Couch had touched thousands of lives in this business over the course of more than four decades as a leading voice for sensible plant management at Virginia Tech.

More importantly, he was a mentor to many. He never lacked for an opinion or for the time to help a student or superintendent who needed support.

Recently, Couch was awarded the 2003 United States Golf Association Green Section Award for "distinguished service to golf through work with turfgrass," and the 2002 National Distinguished Service Award from the GCSAA for "outstanding contributions to the advancement of the golf course superintendents profession."

— Pat Jones, Publisher