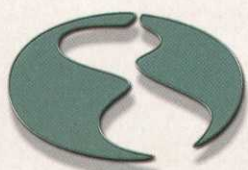


# On the *Run*, Er, Walk



golf industry show

## REPORT

*Golfdom* staff members logged a lot of miles in their loafers to bring you this comprehensive Golf Industry Show report **BY THE GOLFDOM STAFF**

**W**e took our running shoes to Florida, but they never made it out of our suitcases. I bet we did more walking during our near week-long stay in Orlando to cover the Golf Industry Show (GIS) than Olympic walker Michelle Rohl does in training for a race. So the last thing we wanted to do was take a nice morning jog.

While we didn't set any walking records like Rohl has, we may have set some whining records for complaining about our sore feet. (Is it just us, or does the Orange County Convention Center seem like something out of that far-out "2001: A Space Odyssey" flick from the late '60s? Does the building have a beginning and ending or what?) But we never could have brought you this comprehensive report from the first GIS if didn't have our feet to get us around from seminar to press conference to party. So, without further ado, here are the highlights of what we saw, heard and did from Feb. 7-12. By the way the GIS attracted 22,723 attendees and 8,149 qualified buyers for all of you keeping score.

### It's about time

As Jack Nicklaus approached the podium to accept the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America's (GCSAA) most prestigious honor, one had to wonder if the Golden Bear was thinking, "It's about time they gave me this award."

On second thought, we doubt Nicklaus was thinking that when he picked up the association's Old Tom Morris Award dur-

*Continued on page 52*



Jack Nicklaus picked up more hardware for his museum at the show.

PHOTO BY JASON STAHL



### Making the Rounds

**1.** During the trade show, Nufarm Americas enlisted the help of an unlikely ambassador to help promote its new product, Triple Low Odor.

**2.** Jimmy Kidd (far left) and Steve Johnson (far right), who both work at Sandy Lane Golf Club in Barbados, spent some quality time at Floratine's big bash, which was attended by many superintendents. "It's our way of thanking our friends for the privilege of allowing us to assist them in their efforts," said Floratine President Bill Byrnes.

**3.** BASF Professional Turf took a Las Vegas-theme approach to the show. Here, Winnercomm's Chris Barricks (left) and BASF Marketing Manager William Strickland (right) watch the Wheel of Turf spin with a show attendee.

**4.** Trent Bouts, communications director for the Carolinas GCSA, lines up a precarious putt during Bayer Environmental Science's Media Putt-Putt Invitational.

*Continued from page 50*

ing the GIS's opening session. Nicklaus has won more hardware than can be found in a Home Depot. Not to say he didn't appreciate the award, but picking up awards is old hat to a guy who has his own museum for cryin' out loud.

So let's leave the wondering of why Jack didn't win the award 10 or 15 years ago to the people who comprise the golf course maintenance industry. Why now and why not many moons ago? After all, Mark Woodward, past president of the GCSAA, introduced Nicklaus as the modern-day Old Tom Morris. (Like you, we've heard rumors of why Jack didn't receive the award before, but let's just leave it at that.)

Nicklaus didn't have a lot to say during his acceptance speech. But he made sure to give superintendents their due. He praised them for their efforts to raise the bar of golf course maintenance. He said golf course maintenance has improved eons since his professional career began in the early 1960s.

Jack joked of rumors going around that he was so old he played with Old Tom. This made us think even more that he should have received the award long ago.

Better late, we guess.

### No secrets

The big secret is that there should be no secret at all. That was a major theme — and it came through loud and clear — during the seminar, "The Secrets of Expert Irrigation Installers."

Irrigation contractors stressed to a packed room of superintendents how important it is to communicate what they're doing during renovations to golfers and players. And a big part of that responsibility lies with superintendents.

Bill Bartels of Tanto Irrigation stressed the importance of communicating to golfers what contractors are doing on the golf course and why. He advised superintendents to take photographs of an irrigation installation and post them in the clubhouse for all to see. "Then golfers will know what they're going to see





when they get out on the course,” Bartels noted.

The more superintendents prepare their courses’ members and golfers about what will happen during an irrigation renovation, the better off they’ll be in the understanding department, Bartels said.

Chris Soltis of Soltis Golf said superintendents shouldn’t sugarcoat to members and golfers what will happen to their golf courses during an irrigation renovation. Courses will be torn up. “It’s open-heart surgery,” he said, “not blemish control.”

Soltis advised superintendents never to rush — or let others rush them — an irrigation renovation to completion. He stressed the importance of a “real-time” calendar and schedule.

### Nothing but a good time

Aware that the Country Club of the Rockies was only the fourth course in the United States to use Penn A-4 bentgrass on all 18 of its greens, its certified superintendent, Kevin Ross, had immediate worries about thatch.

“Not really so much because of the cultivar itself, but at our elevation (7,500 feet) our climatic conditions are quite difficult to deal with,” said Ross, who spoke during the first Innovative Superintendent Session. “So once we went with the Penn A-4, we had to be pretty proactive in our approach to thatch management.

“One of the reasons we redid the greens initially (in 1996) was because of a thatch problem. And I didn’t want to tell the board of directors, after spending \$1.5 (million) in renovation, that we were going to redo them in another six or eight years because of thatch.”

Based on the USGA Green Section premise that 15 percent to 20 percent of surface area should be removed or impacted per year, Ross touched on several ways to meet that goal, with an emphasis on knowing exact tine sizes.

“All tines are certainly not created equal,” Ross said. “Different companies’ tines have different specs, and that’s up to you to decide which tines to use.”

Compounding the matter, a five-eighths of an inch tine doesn’t make a five-eighths of an inch hole, Ross said. And the Green Section claim does not distinguish between the inside and outside diameters of a tine hole.

“The inside diameter is the true size of a plug removed,” Ross clarified.

### A time to play

Certified Superintendents Michelle L. Frazier and Andrea C. Bakalyar, and Sherry Greene of the LPGA Foundation led a Women’s Forum.

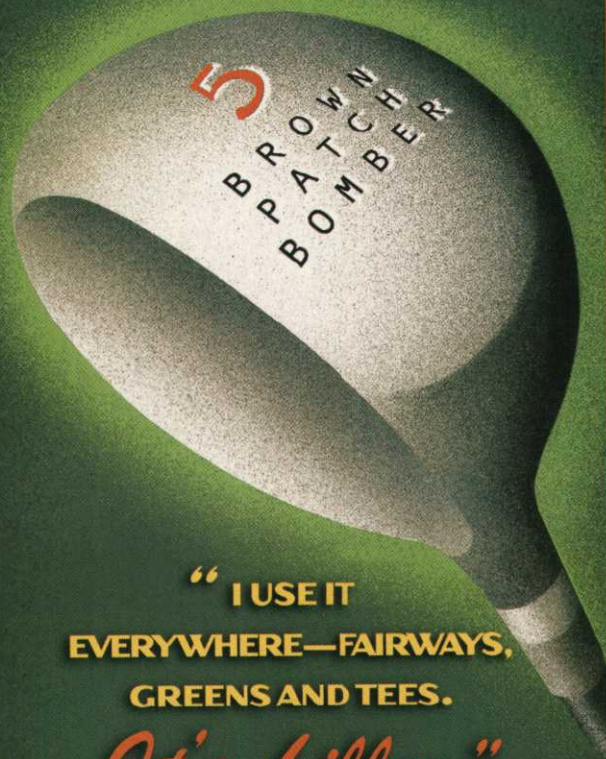
Bakalyar, superintendent of The Wee Course at Williams Creek in Knoxville, Tenn., said she plays her course at least two times a week: once with the course architect and once with the green committee chairman. She said she relies on those games to help her build relationships with these key

*Continued on page 54*



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*Continued from page 53*

people. What she learns about her course while doing so also increases her standing with her board members, who now consider her their agronomic professional who knows their course better than anyone else.

"Playing your own course two or three times a week, on top of working 60 hours a week, might seem like a lot, but it will be integral to the success of your course and to your own professional success," Bakalyar said. "The game of golf itself is the key to your professional success because it builds relationships."

### Completing their chores promptly

At Riverside Country Club in Bozeman, Mont., the workweek starts with a Big Gulp of responsibility. As part of their "7-Eleven Program," certified superintendent Dean Krob and his staff aim to complete seven different operations on each of 18 greens by 11 a.m. every Monday.

It isn't easy, but there is incentive.

"As the staff likes to say, 11 a.m. is when the kitchen opens for lunch," Krob said during the Innovative Superintendents Session.

What takes place before lunchtime is a

smorgasbord of duties. "And we're fortunate to have the golf course closed until 10 a.m. every Monday to complete this program or any other program we deem necessary," Krob said.

A typical Monday morning transpires in this fashion, according to Krob:

**Spiking:** "We can complete all 18 greens and the putting green in about an hour and 30 minutes and you can easily incorporate doing your collars and approaches."

**Verticutting:** "The material removed from verticutting and viewing the green surface up close are just a few of the factors we utilize in determining whether we'll single- or double-cut the greens after verticutting. We also like to take into account how much clippings we remove after the first mowing."

**Single- or double-cutting:** "If we only single-cut, then we follow-up with our greens roller."

**Ultralight topdressing:** "We maintain an application rate of one-third to one-half cubic yard of sand per 5,000 square feet every seven to 10 days. We strive for a very even distribution pattern. It might not look like a lot, but when you're doing it every seven to 10 days, it really adds up."

*Continued on page 57*

# Show *Scuttlebutt*

What we heard, saw and experienced.

Also, some awards you might not have heard about

By Craig F. Zellers

**T**he rumor mill was spinning during the Golf Industry Show, the first trade show to feature several associations, most notably the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America (GCSAA) and the National Golf Course Owners Association (NGCOA). All the talk pointed to next year's show in New Orleans, where several other related golf industry associations will reportedly join the GCSAA's trade show. Included in the mix are:

- Consolidated Range and Ball Picker-Upper Association of America;

- Golf Caddies International Association;
- Affiliated Golf Course Dishwashers Union of Slovothnia;
- Weekend Bunker Edging Crew of the Western States; and
- Golfing Environmental Activists of the World.

Reportedly, the new name of the show is: The Golf Industry & Affiliated Interest Groups and all others Trade Show.

By the way, for those of you who were actually working on the trade-show floor and missed the opportunity to visit nearby Disneyworld, there were some similarities between the two locations:

- A hamburger and soda set you back about \$11.
- Some vendors were accused of having "Mickey Mouse" products.
- Trying to see the show, watch the green being built and attend the seminars led some to believe they were riding on a rollercoaster.

A lot of awards were given out during the show for distinguished, environmental responsibility, etc. But I bet you didn't hear about these awards:

**Work-the-Room Trophy** — Awarded to the superintendent who schmoozed the most invitations to corporate cocktail parties.

**Drool Award** — Given to the superintendent who walked the entire showroom but whose club always buys used equipment.

**We-Do-Need-Stinking-Badges Award** — To the superintendent with the most amount of badges hanging down from his name badge. (I counted seven on him.)

**Shoe-Shine Award** — Given to the young superintendent from Arkansas who went





**BEFORE**

**They Built It . . .  
And They Came**

The "Building of the Green" in the middle of the convention center was one of the highlights of the Golf Industry Show.



**AFTER**

PHOTOS BY: LYNNE BRAKEMAN

back to the Ewing Irrigation booth for a shoeshine a total of 13 times.

**Ingenuity Award** — Presented to all of those who test drove the electric cars on the track simply because they were tired and thought it was a nice place to rest for a spell.

**Worst-Dressed Award** — To all those who wore tennis shoes with sport coats and ties. And give yourself another award for choosing to look funny rather than suffer with the masses.

**Most-Disparaging-Words Award** — Overheard by observers standing at the ropes where the green was built in three days, and earned by a green committee chairman, who commented: "I don't understand why these guys can't do this in two days. And they should have had it rolling to a 12 on the Stimpmeter by Saturday morning."

**Yak Award** — Given to the superintendent who spent the entire three days on the floor talking with old friends and not seeing one piece of equipment.

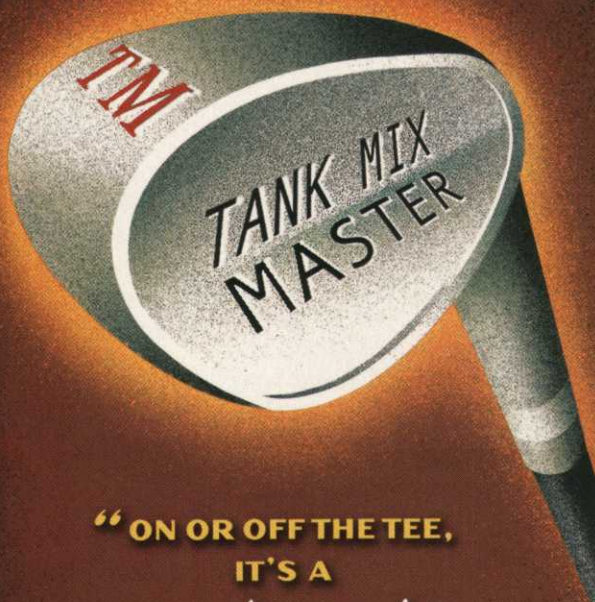
**Fool-the-Boss Trophy** — Awarded to the superintendent who dressed up (and out of character) because his owner was with him.

*Craig F. Zellers is a Toro Golf Irrigation sales representative for Turf Star in California. In a previous life, he was a superintendent.*



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# The Envelope . . . Please!

By Thomas Skernivitz  
Managing Editor

**S**ports Illustrated had to be thinking of guys like me when it decided to paste Rick Reilly's weekly column on its last page. I scan magazines the way Quentin Tarantino spun "Pulp Fiction." I make it to more Pampered Chef parties than tables of contents.

Reilly, on the other hand, definitely wasn't thinking of me during the summer of 1987. In response to fan mail from some other aspiring sports reporter at Bowling Green State University, he reciprocated with a personal (type-written, no less) letter. But the note missed its intended receiver and wound up in my hands.

Eighteen years later, as I reported from the Golf Industry Show in Orlando, I finally decided to share Reilly's misdirected words of encouragement because:

**a)** Reilly was here, too. Syngenta Professional Products, realizing that Reilly is "one of the funniest humans on the planet," according to the *New York Daily News*, wisely enlisted the author of "Who's Your Caddy?" to share top billing with Shamu at the company's Sea World gala;

**b)** his message to my former BGSU colleague still holds saltwater and applies just as well to superintendents as journalists; and,

**c)** it was time to come clean with Reilly's legitimate pen pal, who up until recently, had never seen or heard of the note, which went like this:

■ ■ ■

Denver  
July 31, 1987

Dear Matt:

*How about if you have my job only on certain occasions? Such as two weeks ago in Scotland, when it rained and blew and hailed all over for a week straight at the British Open and they lost my luggage and my hotel was 40 miles out of town on the wrong side of the road, etc. THEN you wouldn't want my job.*

*Anyway, I read your clips and found them to be pretty good. You're cocky as hell, but I guess I was probably that bad, too, in college. I don't have any doubt that you'll make it to a big paper or magazine. Of course, the question is if YOU have any doubt about it. You mustn't. I know a guy who wrote 102 letters and sent 102 packets of clips out before he finally got a low-*

*level job with the Colorado Springs Sun. He hung in and hung in and finally got his foot in the proverbial door. Now he's a columnist in Oklahoma City and he's only been writing for five years.*

*Does this sound like a halftime speech? Don't give up. Write all the time — for ANYBODY that will print you — for cheap. Anything to get good clips. (By the way, I think you need more variety in your clips — not so much hockey.) Anyway, write anywhere and everywhere, no matter how small. All that matters is that your clips are good and diverse. Nobody cares where as much as how.*

*Here's hoping this reaches you sometime this year.*

Best,  
Rick Reilly

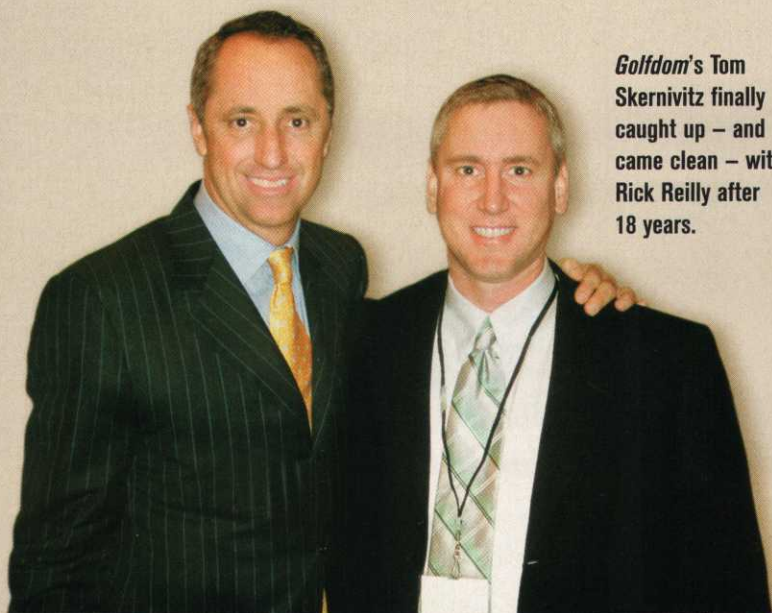
■ ■ ■

The bad news, of course, is that I missed that "sometime this year" deadline the way Nuke LaLoosh *juuuuust* missed the outside corner. Only right before the GIS show did I finally try to track down Matt, who, back when the Mile High City postmark was fresh, had already graduated and split northwest Ohio forever.

Now the good news: The guy that none other than Rick Reilly thought was good enough to make it . . . made it. Matt Winkeljohn, my old college buddy, informed me that he is now the Atlanta Falcons beat writer for the *Atlanta Journal-Constitution*. He started small, literally, having worked his way up from the agate page of the AJC sports section. He moved on to cover Southeastern Conference football. And somewhere along the way he must have dumped hockey.

As for my 18-year delay in forwarding the Dear Winkeljohn letter, I'll paraphrase its author and just hope that Matt doesn't care "when" as much as "how." And, besides, all's well that ends well, right? That certainly seems to work for *Sports Illustrated*.

**Golfdom's Tom Skernivitz finally caught up — and came clean — with Rick Reilly after 18 years.**





*Continued from page 54*

**Dragging greens:** "We're not putting down that much sand, so it doesn't take much to go once over the greens."

**Greens roller:** "We've found that rolling is not only beneficial after all this is done, we've found that it is very effective in working the sand down into the canopy of the grass."

**Spraying/watering:** "After all the abuse we've done to the green, we give it a light watering and it sure helps out."

### **Salt of the turf**

With courses in many areas of the country forced to switch to effluent for irrigation, the amount of salt and nutrients in that irrigation water has potential to cause problems.

In a tag-team presentation on salt-affected turfgrass sites, Robert Carrow of the University of Georgia and Ron Duncan of Turfgrass Ecosystems in San Antonio, Texas, analyzed the strategy to handle salt-affected grass during a seminar.

"The biggest fear is loading the soil with solids," Duncan explained. "Remember, that's how the Great Salt Lake and the Salton Sea got started."

The answer is managing the salts along with the turf. It requires frequent soil testing, water testing and a realization that each location will react differently to nutrient-loaded water.

"You have to re-examine your maintenance programs, your aeration practices, the amendments that you use," Duncan continued. "All of those practices have to be designed to the water quality that goes down in the irrigation."

### **'Gold mines of the west'**

There are 33 Indian golf resort-casinos in 15 states, with seven more under construction and 11 more in the conceptual stage. Mike Skenandore's message to superintendents at the Tribal Golf Forum on was clear: Keep these "gold mines of the West" thriving and look for ways to further develop your own tribe-owned golf courses for the sake of the Native American people.

"This results in increased revenue, a decrease in unemployment of the Native American people, and a higher feeling of self-worth," said Skenandore, a Native American and superintendent of Wanaki Golf Course in Menomonee Falls, Wis.

Skenandore emphasized that Native Americans are the neediest minority in America, having the highest unemployment rate and lowest education rate. Therefore, they are the most in need of the new economic opportunities expanded golf course operations could bring.

"No longer can casinos be considered the 'lion's share' of tribal revenue," Skenandore said. "High-end golf courses must be paired with casinos in the event of political uncertainty with gaming compacts."

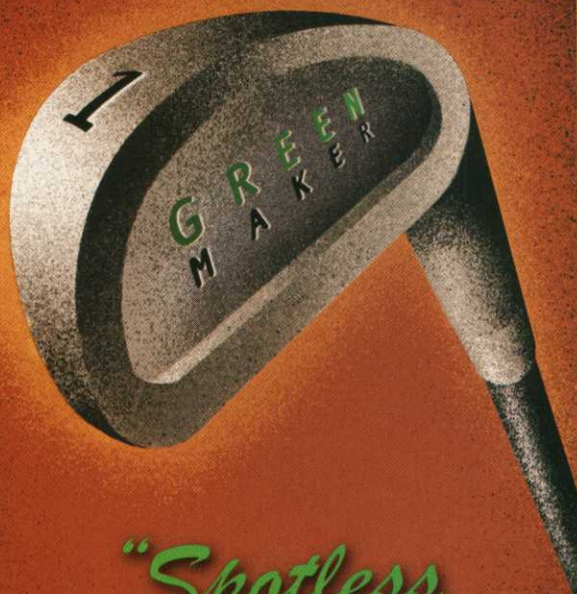
The way to get there?

*Continued on page 58*



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## On the Run

*Continued from page 57*

- develop a plan;
- apply for grants (such as a First Tee grant); and
- talk to other facilities to learn about their successes/failures.

### For good of the game

Four topics of discussion were on the table at the United States Golf Association's Green Section Education Program held Feb. 11: the environment, green speed, organic fertilizers and distance control.

**Environment:** Kimberly Erusha, the Green Section's director of education,

emphasized that environmental issues are here to stay, and that superintendents need to ask themselves questions such as: 1) Do I have a written environmental plan? 2) Does my maintenance facility need to be updated? 3) Do I have buffer zones around my water features?

The USGA also urged superintendents to document their environmental efforts and share their message with the public.

**Green speed:** Larry Gilhuly, director of the Green Section's Northwest Region, and agronomist Matt Nelson teamed to pose the question, "Are fast greens

## Show Quotables

"Our association is focused on the center of the universe – and that universe is the golf course superintendent"

— **Steve Mona**, CEO of the GCSAA, in a speech to superintendents, owners and others during the Opening Session Thursday.

week that the greens were terrible and the fairways were long. Well, we don't have those complaints anymore."

— **Jack Nicklaus** on how much golf course maintenance has improved since his professional career began in the early 1960s.

"You can always find something that has to do with peace, solitude and nature when you're at the golf course. And that's because of your work. You are my greatest heroes. And the reason is because you are the people that made me fall in love with golf."

— **Peter Kessler**, the former voice of the Golf Channel and HBO Sports, in his address to superintendents.

"We look at all the changes in the industry, but there are a few things that haven't changed."

— **Ralph Nicotera**, vice president of sales and turf products for Jacobson, on the quality of cut for turf, which will always be a mainstay.

"The level of golf course maintenance was fair at best in those days. Golfers complained all

"We have to make our golf courses easier. Greens are way too fast. Contours are so drastic. We have to make the greens slower and the courses easier for the weekend or once-a-week player."

— **Mark Krause**, owner, Muskego Lake Country Club, Muskego, Wis.

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ruining the game?" The answer was yes, if you consider that fast greens: 1) slow the pace of play, 2) eliminate interesting hole locations, 3) slow recovery from ballmarks, and 4) invite more turf stress from diseases and insects.

They emphasized that 9-foot to 10-foot Stimpmeter speeds were adequate for the "average" golfer and would allow for more enjoyment of the game.

**Organic fertilizers:** Stan Zontek, director of the Green Section's Mid-Atlantic Region, cleared up some misconceptions about organic fertilizers. "They're not bad products, but they're also not wonder products," he said. Tips he offered to superintendents: 1) develop a buyer's checklist, 2) determine the products' strengths and weaknesses, and 3) determine whether or not the product is cost-effective for the result you desire.

**Distance control:** USGA President Fred Ridley opened his talk on the controversial topic of distance control by saying, "Equipment issues are complex, and there are no simple answers." The increase in average driving distance on the PGA Tour from 260 yards to 286 yards from 1993-2003 is the result of several factors, he said, including greater athleticism, improved golf balls and the use of launch monitors. Measures have been taken to control distance, however, and there has been no increase in the PGA Tour's driving distance average since 2002. "If more increases occur," Ridley said, "the USGA will take action to protect the game."

## Back to all that walking

While we were walking those many miles in the convention center and up and down Universal Boulevard, we kept humming songs with the word "walk" in them. Before we walk out on this report, we'd like to leave you with our list of the Top 10 songs on strolling. A Ringo Starr-like drum roll please ...

10. "Walking in Memphis" — Marc Cohn;
9. "Walk on By" — Dionne Warwick;
8. "Don't Walk Away Renee" — The Left Banke;

## Congratulations Are in Order

Congrats to **Seth Strickland**, superintendent of Miami (Fla.) Shores Country Club, who shot a 1-under-par 71 on the International Course at ChampionsGate Golf Club to cap off a two-day performance of 4-under-par 140 to win the GCSAA Golf Championship.

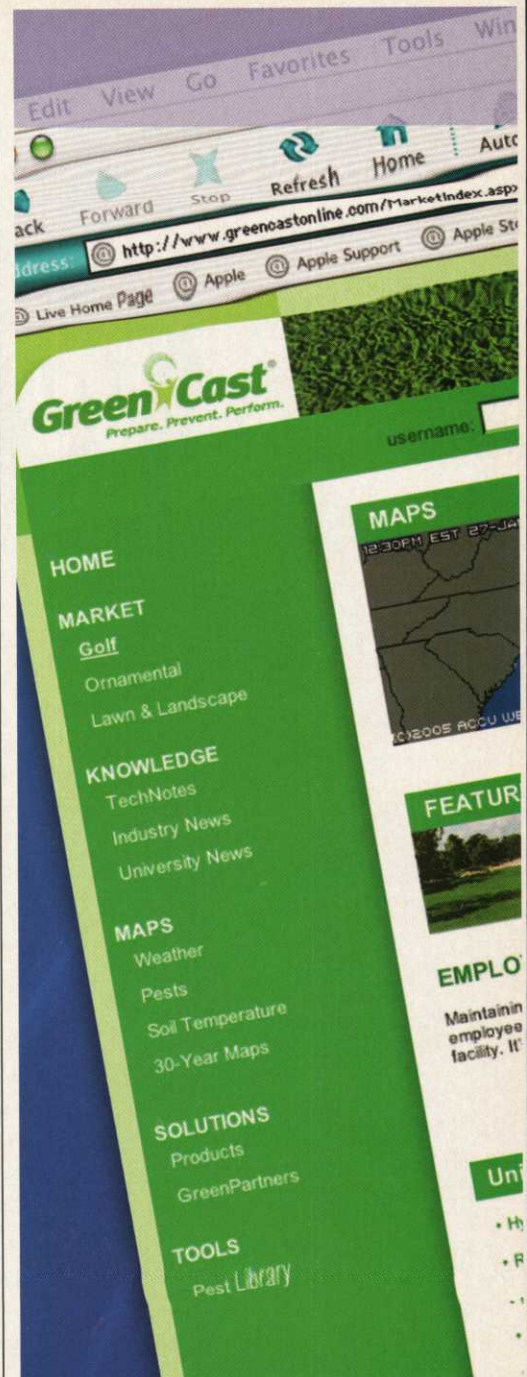
Congrats to new president **Tim O'Neill**, certified superintendent at the Country Club of Darien (Conn.); and new vice president **Sean A. Hoolehan**, certified superintendent of Wildhorse Resort Golf Course in Pendleton, Ore.; and new secretary/treasurer **Ricky D. Heine**, certified superintendent/general manager of The Golf Club Star Ranch in Austin, Texas

Congrats to the winners of the 2004 GCSAA/Golf Digest Environmental Leaders in Golf Awards:

- National Public (Overall Winner): **Mark Claburn**, Tierra Verde Golf Club, Arlington, Texas;
- National Private: **John F. Anderson**, The Club at Pronghorn, Sunriver, Ore.;
- National Resort: **Sandy C. Clark**, Barona Creek Golf Club, San Diego, Calif.; and
- International: **Sean A. Kjemhus**, Stewart Creek Golf and Country Club, Canmore, Alberta, Canada.

7. "Walk the Line" — Johnny Cash;
6. "Walk On" — U2;
5. "Walking on the Moon" — The Police;
4. "Walkin' Down the Line" — Bob Dylan;
3. "Walking on Sunshine" — Katrina and the Waves;
2. "Walk Like An Egyptian" — The Bangles; and
1. "Walk This Way" — Aerosmith.

*Editor's note: Larry Aylward, Tom Skernivitz, Curt Harler, Lynne Brakeman and Jason Stahl contributed to this report.*



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