

## Business briefs

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game of golf and golf course architecture.

"John Singleton is a true gentleman, problem solver and friend to everyone in the golf industry," said ASGCA President Bill Love. "His 40-year career at Toro and his dedication to golf and golf course architects has helped us provide the world's golfers with the best possible playing conditions."

### **AGCOA joins the world**

On June 9 the golf industry — that's world golf industry — welcomed a new association: The Asian Golf Course Owners Association (AGCOA).

The AGCOA is a non-profit organization, commissioned by the National Golf Course Owners Association. Golf course owners and operators attended the inauguration of AGCOA, together with the nomination and selection of AGCOA board and committee members in Beijing, China.

The NGCOA was founded in 1971 by a group of public access golf owners. Since then the group has grown to more than 6,000 members in America alone. Another commissioned organization is the European Golf Course Owners Association (EGCOA), founded in 2001. Seeing the explosive growth potential of the Asia's golf market, NGCOA entered Asia as AGCOA.

### **Huesgen leaves Pebble for new club**

Tom Huesgen, the former superintendent at Pebble Beach, will assume the same role at Cornerstone, a new private golf community located in southwestern Colorado, near the ski resort city of Telluride.

"Obviously, Pebble Beach has grandeur, history and a matchless setting for golf," Huesgen said, "but I have a very special opportunity at Cornerstone. This is going to be a fabulous opportunity and a unique challenge."

A 6,000-acre project, Cornerstone features a Greg Norman Signature course.

### **Becker acquires Brazilian producer**

Becker Underwood acquired Nital Urbana, Brazil's largest producer and supplier of rhizobium inoculants. Previously, Nital Urbana was a joint venture between Becker Underwood and Sr. João Jurandir.



## EXPECT A BUSY HURRICANE SEASON, FORECASTERS SAY

**A**s if 2004 wasn't prolific enough, the forthcoming hurricane season is expected to be even busier, according to forecasters. The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) calls for seven to nine hurricanes this season, which runs from June 1 to Nov. 30. Of those, three to five will be major storms ranked Category 3 or higher on the Saffir-Simpson scale.

The forecast is slightly higher than had been 2004's, which predicted six to eight hurricanes, two to four of which would be at least Category 3, which has winds of 111 mph to 130 mph.

The 2004 season wound up spawning 12 major storms, including four that hit Florida directly and one indirectly. An average Atlantic season produces six hurricanes, said Frank Lepore of the National Hurricane Center (NHC).

"Just for historical perspective, we were actually below average in the decades of the '70s, the '80s and half-way through the '90s," Lepore told CNN. "That is, less than six hurricanes on average per season."

"It is difficult to make any kind of an accurate prediction of how many of these will strike land," said NOAA Administrator Conrad Lautenbacher. "But I think statistically you can look at the fact that when seasons are more active, and we have a higher level of hurricanes, you have a higher chance of hurricanes striking the United States."

"So I would expect two to three perhaps striking the United States," Lautenbacher said.

Lepore said scientists were looking at warmer ocean temperatures as a possible factor in this year's forecast. "The issue this year is the anomalously warm sea surface temperatures in the Atlantic," he said.

The surface temperatures of the Atlantic are warmer earlier this year than they were at the same time in 2004, Lepore said.

Another report states there are "high odds" of a hurricane making a major hit in the United States.