

Business briefs

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Judge rules against ABT Group

A U.S. bankruptcy judge entered a \$14.9 million judgement against former AgriBioTech chairman and CEO Richard Budd and ABT Group, a limited liability company Budd established with his nephew Kenneth Budd. Kenneth Budd was formerly president of AgriBiotech. The judge found that Budd received a preferential loan repayment of more than \$10 million in June 1999, within a year of the company's bankruptcy filing in January 2000. The judge also ruled that some payments made to ABT Group within 90 days of the bankruptcy filing were also preferential.

Woodward heads to Torrey Pines

The city of San Diego hired Mark Woodward, the past president of the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America (GCSAA), to manage its golf course operations, including Torrey Pines, Balboa Park and Mission Bay, beginning Feb. 15. The hiring ended a seven-month national search in the wake of Jim Allen's resignation in May.

Woodward, 52, is an Arizona native and served the last 10 years as the parks and recreation director in Mesa, where he managed two municipal golf courses (Dobson Ranch and Riverview), two Major League Baseball spring-training facilities, a tennis center and a cemetery. He has been a certified superintendent since 1986.

Grigg Brothers celebrate 10 years

From Tater Tots to turf nutrients. That statement defines the legacy of two sets of Grigg brothers.

This year marks the 10th anniversary of business for the second set of Grigg brothers, Mark and Gary, who have spent the past 10 years developing, producing, and marketing organic and amino acid based fertilizer and liquid nutrients characterized by selected natural organic complexing and chelating agents for foliar and soil based applications. In 1995 Mark and Gary followed in the footsteps of their father Golden and their uncle, Nephi, who ventured into many successful business projects together. Their biggest success was Tater Tots.

Yale Returns to Yesterday

GOLF COURSE REGAINING ITS CLASSIC LOOK, THANKS TO NEW SUPERINTENDENT AND NEW OPERATION PROCEDURES

An Analysis by Anthony Pioppi, Contributing Editor

Mike Moran pulled his golf car up to the fourth green at Yale Golf Course with a slight smirk on his face and watched me putt out. The assistant superintendent ("Master Gardner" in Yale union speak) didn't say a word.

"You can now see the fifth green," I said incredulously pointing out past where he sat.

He nodded and laughed.

"And that was only one tree," he said gesturing to where the lone oak had stood for decades obscuring the view of the fifth.

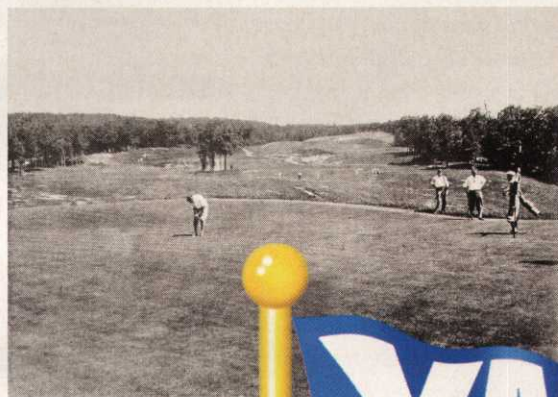
For more than 20 years Moran has worked at the Yale course, including two stints as interim superintendent. He has watched helplessly as the course decayed through neglect, ignorance and apathy. But that has all changed.

In a way, the removal of the tree serves to illustrate the changes at Yale under the guidance of superintendent Scott Ramsay, who came aboard in January 2004. It was he who realized that small measures, such as the cutting down of one tree, could make a difference.

The removal of the tree in itself was no big deal, but in Ramsay Yale has someone it has not had in the position of superintendent perhaps since it opened in 1926 — a person who appreciates the glory and genius of Seth Raynor's crowning achievement; a person who understands Yale's place in the history of golf course architecture; and a person who realizes what this course could do for Yale if restored to its original intent.

Could Yale one day host a United States Golf Association (USGA) event such as the men's senior amateur? There are those at Yale and the USGA who think so. A Yale Golf Course brought back to its original intent could charge three times what it does now for memberships and outings and still have a waiting list.

This is the greatest college golf course in the United States, and one of the 20 greatest golf courses in this country and Top 100 worldwide if prop-



GEORGE BAHTO ARCHIVES/GOLF ILLUSTRATED

A view of Yale's second green in 1927.

DAN BEEDY

erly restored. It's a bold statement, but I stand by it.

The school administration, much of it through the work of John Pepper, who was appointed vice president for finance and administration in January 2004, has partnered with the unions to create a better working situation at the course resulting in better playing conditions. Pepper is the former president and chairman of the board for Procter & Gamble.

The school and the unions that represent workers across the spectrum of jobs at Yale have had a long contentious relationship. The superintendent had little say in the hiring of seasonal help before Ramsay arrived. Often times those who worked at other Yale jobs, such as in cafeterias during the school year, were shipped to the course in the summers. That has all changed. This past year Ramsay was allowed to hire 16 seasonal employees, many of them Yale students. And in another negotiated change, seasonal workers are now allowed to do more than just fill divots and rake bunkers — they can operate mowers.

It was also decided to bring in outside contractors to aerate, seed and fertilize Yale wall-to-wall, a job that would have been impossible for Ramsay's undersized staff.

Tree removal crews have been on site for the second winter in a row in an effort to reverse the decades-long tide of overplanting that obliterated the open style Raynor created through the heavily wooded property.

Ramsay has been doing his part, reclaiming greens that lost considerable size over the years.

This is not to say all is perfect, there is still much work to be done. Harry Meussel, the superintendent who oversaw Yale for more than 40 years before leaving in the early 1990s, used a bulldozer to obliterate original distinctive Raynor design characteristics under the guise of ease of maintenance.

A bunker restoration program that ended just a few years ago is abysmal. Architect Roger Rulewich, lauded for his original design work but not for restoration, failed to recapture the Raynor style. One needs to look no further than the work on the Principal's Nose Bunker short of the 17th green where he decimated much of the original feature while adding one bunker that looks more like a litter box than a golf hazard.

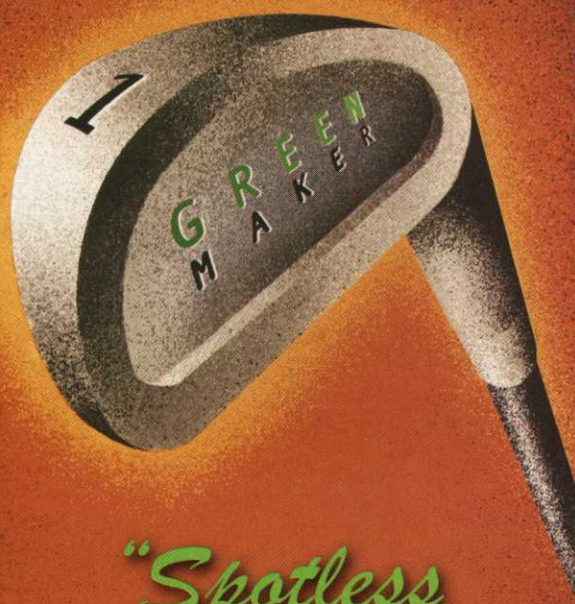
The good news is that much of the ill-advised work can be reversed under the guidance of a knowledgeable architect. The really good news is that for the first time since the earliest days of the layout, the school is beginning to fully appreciate what it has.

In 1925 the *New York Times* described Yale with accolades that can one day hold true again: "When finished it will be one of the finest golf courses in the United States. ... The course, in its general characteristics, is unique and wholly unlike any course in America."



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