

**R**etief Goosen is packing his suitcase for the BASF People vs. the Pros tournament, set for Aug. 18 through Aug. 22 at Pinehurst. He's bringing more than his lucky polo shirt and favorite golf shoes. Goosen is bringing his game face.

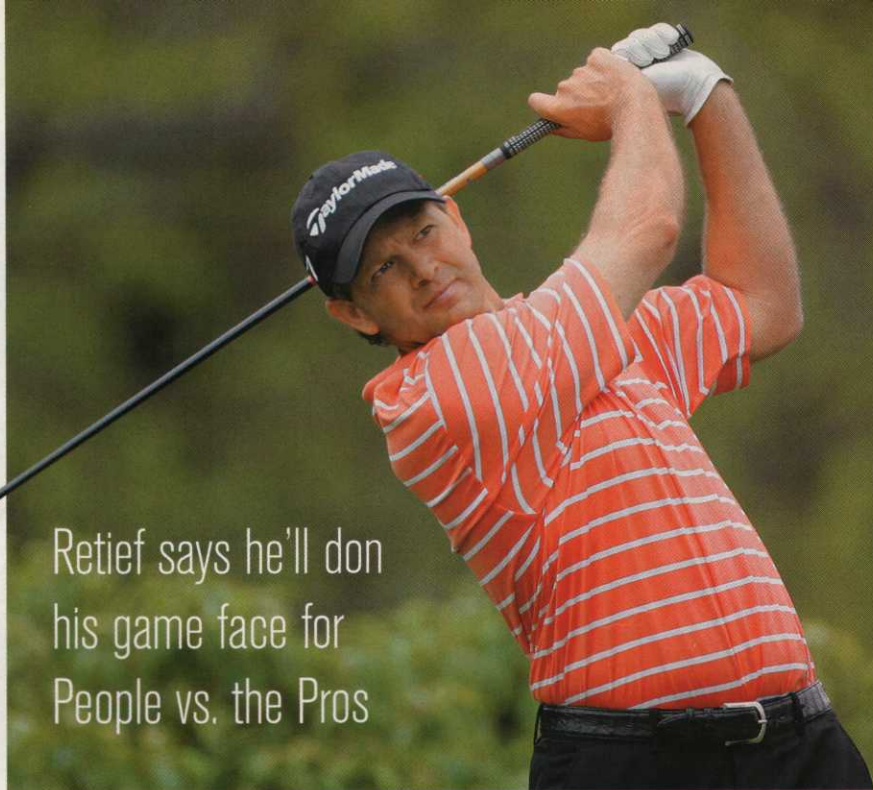
While the People vs. the Pros is not the pressure-packed U.S. Open, of which the 37-year-old South African has won twice, Goosen is not coming to Pinehurst to lose his match against an amateur — which could be a golf course superintendent — who he will compete against in a head-to-head 18-hole match on Pinehurst's No. 8 course for a chance to win \$50,000 for a charity of choice.

Goosen, in a phone interview with *Golfdom*, says he'll be a friendly foe, but . . .

"If [the amateur] is playing well, I'll have to start pulling some tricks on him and intimidate him a little bit," Goosen says. "I'll get him extra nervous so I can try and win the dang thing."

This is the fourth year for People vs. the Pros and the second time it has been held at Pinehurst. Two hundred amateur golfers, divided into two age groups, will compete in a three-day, 54-hole handicapped stroke play tournament on Pinehurst No. 5 from Aug. 19 through Aug. 21. The low-net winner of the 18- to 49-year-old tournament will play Goosen on Pinehurst No. 8 on Aug. 22. The low-net winner of the 50-and-over tournament will play PGA pro Gary McCord for a chance at \$50,000 for charity. Both matches will be broadcast on ESPN2.

Twenty-five superintendents from throughout the United States, who qualified in 20 regional qualifying tournaments hosted by BASF Professional Turf & Ornamentals, have a shot at playing Goosen or McCord. Also, the top two finishing superintendents from each age bracket (outside of the two overall winners) will square off in the third-annual BASF Superintendents' Cup Tournament, also set for Aug. 22, for the chance



Retief says he'll don his game face for People vs. the Pros

# Goosen Won't Loosen Up

By Larry Aylward, Editor in Chief

to win \$15,000 cash and \$10,000 in BASF products.

This is the third year that BASF has sponsored the event. It's the second time BASF will be the title sponsor. As title sponsor, BASF gets to place its name before the event's name, as in the "BASF People vs. the Pros." As title sponsor BASF also gets more airtime on ESPN2 for advertising.

Toni Bucci, business manager for BASF Professional Turf & Ornamentals, says BASF will take advantage of that airtime to promote superintendents. "Our strategy is to educate the public in general, particularly golfers, about the valuable work that superintendents do," she says.

Goosen, who won the U.S. Open at Southern Hills Country Club in 2001 and again at Shinnecock Golf Club in

2004, says he is looking forward to People vs. the Pros. "It's great for amateurs to be able to play against the pros," he says.

If Goosen ends up playing a superintendent in his title match, chances are he'll have some kind words to say to that person before he dons his game face.

"Without them, we wouldn't have good golf courses to play on," Goosen says of superintendents. "It's a skillful job they do. It's not just about cutting grass. You need to have a lot of knowledge about that grass. It's a very difficult job."

Goosen says he has a better understanding of what superintendents do because he has begun to design his own golf courses. He says he has talked to superintendents in-depth about several aspects associated with golf course design and

*Continued on page 62*



## Goosen Won't Loosen Up

*Continued from page 60*

maintenance, including what turf types to use on his layouts. He says superintendents know best what will work and what won't.

Speaking of Goosen's designs, they might take on the look of a few Jack Nicklaus-designed courses.

"[Nicklaus] is my favorite designer," Goosen says. "I look a lot at what he has done at his golf courses and try to learn from him. Some of his courses aren't severe [layouts], and average players can play them and enjoy them. Some of his other courses are purely designed for professional golf."

Goosen's favorite Nicklaus design is Muirfield Village Golf Club in Dublin, Ohio, where he has played several times in the annual Memorial Tournament. "I love that course," he says. "It's a great design."

Even though Goosen has made a name for himself at the U.S. Open, he didn't fare so well this year in the tour-

namment, which was held at Winged Foot Golf Club in June. Goosen failed to make the cut.

"I like Winged Foot; I like all U.S. Open setups," Goosen says. "I just didn't play as well as I would have liked."

Two years ago Goosen won at Shinnecock after staging a remarkable putting exhibition. Interestingly, Shinnecock's slick greens left many players complaining they were too fast. But not Goosen.

"I don't think they went over the top there," Goosen says of Shinnecock's setup. He points out that he won the tournament with a four-under par score. "Look at Winged Foot," he says. "Five-over (par) won there. I don't think anything was wrong at Shinnecock."

Despite the high scores at Winged Foot, no one really complained about the conditions as they did at Shinnecock, which turned into a gripe fest on some levels. Goosen says Winged Foot's greens were more challenging to play than Shinnecock's.

"They were much bumpier and not nearly rolling as true as they were at Shinnecock," he adds. "The rough obviously was thicker at Winged Foot than it was at Shinnecock."

Goosen says he's not complaining about Winged Foot's setup. "The whole idea at the U.S. Open is somewhere close to par should be the winning score," he adds.

Goosen says competition on the PGA Tour these days is tougher than ever. It's also tough in overseas events.

"You have to play really well to win," he says. "Everybody hits it 300 yards and straight. It basically comes down to the guy who makes the most putts who will win at the end of the week."

But it's great to see so many players have a chance to win, Goosen says.

"It's a lot tougher to win out there than it was five years ago," he adds. "But then again, Tiger Woods was so on top of his game five years ago that it seemed like he was winning every week." ■

## Editorial Index

Company	Page	Pursell Technologies	14, 18
Agrium Inc.	14, 18	RiverCrest Golf Club & Preserve	36
BASF	16, 60	Sand Creek Station Golf Course	10
Boston Hills Country Club	29		
Club Car	14		
Corte Bella Country Club	6		
Cottonwood Hills Golf Club	10		
Del Webb Sun City Palm Desert	27		
Hoover Pumping Systems	6		
Irrigation Association	14		
Kierland Golf Club	26		
LESCO	18		
Los Angeles Country Club	8		
Medinah Country Club	16		
Mission Hills Country Club	27		
Mission Hills Resort	27		
Muirfield Village Golf Club	62		
Oakwood Country Club	14		
Perdido Bay Golf Club	6		
Pinehurst Resort	27, 60		

Shinnecock Hills Country Club	60	TPC at Avenel Course	18
Spring Creek Golf Club	10	Traverse City Golf & Country Club	6
Syngenta Professional Products	14, 18	Whittle Springs	28
Toro Co. (The)	14	Winged Foot	62
Torrey Pines	28	Yucca Ridge Golf Club	10

## Ad Index

Advertiser	Page No.	Links Seed	17	Standard Golf	39
Andersons, The	04, 38	Liquid Fence	61	Syngenta	12-13, 47, cv3
Arysta	28-29	Markers, Inc	61	Target	(reg) 32A-B
B A S F Corp	05, 20-21, 45	Milorganite	37	Tech Sales	61
Bell Labs	04	Novozymes	11	Turf Merchants	03
Chemtura Corp	59	Oregon Fine Fescue	19	Turfco	31
Cleary Chemical Corp	cv4	Oxford Gardens	32	West Coast Turf	43
Environmental Turf	02	PBI Gordon	15	Wood Bay	30
FlexStake Inc	61	Par Aide	09		
Howard Fertilizer	(reg) 25A	Precision Labs	23		
Irrigation Association	33	Rain Bird	36		
John Deere	Bellyband, 07	Richway Industries	61		
Lesco Inc	25B	Scotts Seed	cv2		
		SePro Corp	41		
		Sisis	02		

### TURFGRASS TRENDS

Bayer Tartan	53
Floratine	57
John Deere and Co	51
Pursell Tech	55

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