

Off The Fringe

Testing, Testing, Testing

A BEHIND-THE-SCENES LOOK
AT HOW CLUB CAR PUTS ITS
VEHICLES THROUGH THE RIGORS
OF THE REAL WORLD

By Larry Aylward, Editor in Chief

In a section of scenic woods, tucked behind Club Car Inc.'s headquarters in Augusta, Ga., is a test track. It's where Club Car's creations, from utility vehicles to golf cars, go to find out if they'll make it in this wicked world of bumps and pot holes.

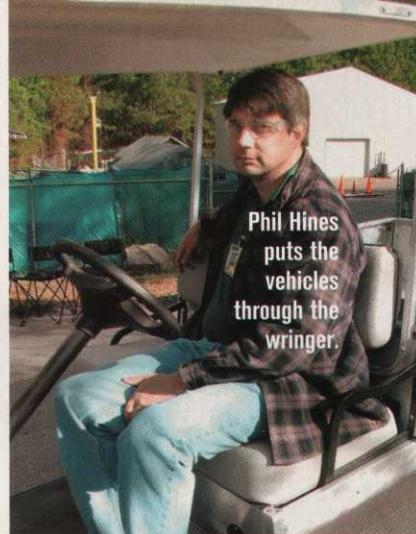
Phil Hines, a Club Car test specialist, helps with the evaluation procedures. It's Hines' job, so to speak, to put the vehicles through the wringer to make sure they can handle the rigors of the golf course under real-life conditions.

In essence, the test track is more like an obstacle course. It's marked with a variety of obstructions to see

what the vehicles are made of, literally. There are steep slopes, brutal bumps and pitiless puddles. Often, it's Hines driving the vehicles through the stumbling blocks.

Get this: Hines says he and other test specialists put the vehicles through 10 years of life in about four weeks.

"We do two types of testing to investigate the stability," says Hines, who has worked at Club Car for about 10 years. "One test is called static stability, where we put a vehicle on the table and tilt it to find the angle where it becomes unstable. The other test is called dynamic stability testing, where we actually drive the vehicle and explore the rigors of the handling. We'll drive it and put it in conditions that no customer should ever have to do. And we'll discover what will happen when we push the vehicle



further than it should be pushed."

Hines spends about half his time driving a vehicle and listening for bumps, squeaks and rattles.

"I note anything that might indicate there's an issue with the car, and then I investigate it," he says.

If the job sounds fun, it is for the most part. The best days are, no surprise here, when projects go smoothly.

"We have long hours and long days," Hines says. "But when we get to the end of a project and have a successful launch and then get rave reviews from our customers, it makes it all worthwhile."

Happy driving.

Tales from Augusta

WHAT SOME GOLF FANS WILL DO
TO SECURE A MEMORY OF THE MASTERS

By Larry Aylward, Editor in Chief

The Masters Tournament, won by Phil Mickelson in April inside the ropes, is not without its stories outside of the ropes.

Bill Bryant, president of Bryant Marketing Communications, a golf industry communications firm in Alpharetta, Ga., says he was walking out the gate at Augusta National Golf Club after the Par-3 Contest on Wednesday of the week and he casually tossed his \$36 admittance badge in a trash bin.

"A couple of seconds later, a guy asked if he could have the badge," Bryant says. "He said he just wanted to get in for a few minutes to see the course. It didn't seem to matter to him that the big course was closed and the day's play on the par-3 course was nearly complete."

Bryant told the man he just tossed his badge in the trash but that the man could have it if he wanted to fish it out of



the trash. "As I made my way to the parking lot, I looked over my shoulder to see the guy fishing around in the trash bin," Bryant says. "That reminded me how revered Augusta National is and what a special spot it holds in the hearts and minds of so many people."

Chuck Calhoun, superintendent of John's Island Club in Vero Beach, Calif., offers this story of a

fan starstruck by PGA player John Daly. Or maybe the fan was just looking to make some money.

As Calhoun was waiting at the crosswalk in front of the No. 7 tee on Friday morning during the tournament, Daly and his group had just teed off and were walking down in front of the tee.

"Daly throws his cigarette butt down on the ground right on the edge of the crosswalk," Calhoun says. "Well, as soon as the gallery men opened the ropes, this guy runs over and snags Daly's butt and sticks it in his pocket. I haven't checked yet, but it's probably on e-bay by now."