

# Off The Fringe

## Business briefs

### Mona: A Tough Decision

Steve Mona says it's difficult to put into words how tough of a decision it was for him to resign as CEO of the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America to accept the newly-created position as CEO of the World Golf Foundation.

"The GCSAA is a wonderful organization and I will miss my direct association with it. The professional members — the superintendents and their assistants — are extremely talented, possess great integrity, are passionately loyal and are tireless in their support of each other. They truly are golf's unseen heroes," Mona said in a statement.

Mona will remain with the GCSAA for up to six more months. He has served as the GCSAA's CEO since 1993.

"We are sad to lose Steve as our leader," said GCSAA President Ricky D. Heine, the certified golf course superintendent and general manager at The Golf Club Star Ranch in Austin, Texas. "He has meant so much to the association. In his nearly 14 years, the association not only developed highly valuable programs and services that benefited not only the members, but the facility, the business and the game as well."

### Summer Rounds Rise

Same-store rounds in the United States rose in 2007 vs. 2006 in the important summer months of May, June and July, according to the National Golf Foundation.

Rounds were up 4.1 percent in July nationwide, bringing the year-to-date number to -0.4 percent. Premium and mid-fee public courses moved into positive territory through the first seven months of the year.

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Jerry Corbett is technical services manager for Quali-Pro.

## A Service Economy

COMPANY EXPANDS TECHNICAL SUPPORT By David Frabotta, Senior Editor

**G**eneric chemical producers aren't typically known for their customer service. Superintendents largely need to rely on their own expertise when applying post-patent products.

Enter Jerry Corbett. Many know him as the long-time biology manager at Bayer Environmental Science's research facility in Clayton, N.C. He helped the product managers conduct trials and collect data on burgeoning active ingredients, combination products and other application trials. The data he collected was one of the reasons Bayer could prove how their products work compared to others in the market.

Now, Corbett uses his expertise with Quali-Pro, the turf division of Maktsheshim Agan, the largest post-patent chemical formulator in the world. As technical services manager for the company, Corbett is in charge of conducting research, developing product data and shepherding support for end-users. That means someone is on hand to field your questions, comments or concerns when using Quali-Pro products.

"Superintendents can't afford to make a mistake with inferior products," Corbett says. "That's why data is important in this industry, and why we're taking it to the next level with technical support."

Corbett began his tenure in January, and his acquisition represents a deliberate shift for the Israeli company, which conducts business in North America from Raleigh, N.C., where the company invited distributors and the media in August for a press tour.

Quali-Pro Product and Marketing Director Russ Mitchell says its "hybrid model" will help differentiate it from other post-patent manufacturers, even if the company might never have the research, development and testing prowess that name-brand manufacturers possess.

About half of Quali-Pro's business plan involves traditional post-patent formulations; about one-quarter of its business plans to involve creating new combination formulations, and about one-quarter will strive to produce new chemistries and active ingredients.

Corbett will be on hand to help navigate new and old products alike. ■





# syngenta Business Tip of the Month

## RISE Helps Historic New Orleans Landmark Transcend

**R**ISE (Responsible Industry for a Sound Environment) held its annual meeting in New Orleans last month. Twenty members of the national trade association for specialty pesticide and fertilizer manufacturers, formulators and distributors made it a priority to help the city ravaged by Hurricane Katrina two years ago with their own working hands. They worked to restore one of New Orleans' most unique green spaces, Longue Vue House and Gardens, which was severely damaged during the storm.

"We serve the lawn and garden industries every day, but usually we go about it in a much different way," said Josh Weeks, chairman of the RISE Governing Board and vice president of Bayer CropScience. "Putting on the gloves and boots and grabbing a shovel is a little different than what we normally do at RISE — but it's been fun and our industry will leave a lasting mark here at Longue Vue as part of New Orleans' restoration."

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**Syngenta's Austen Sutton (left), Jose Milan and John Hott weed and wrestle stalks of golden rod in Longue Vue Gardens.**



## Rewarding Loyal Customers

**F**rom "frequent shopper cards" at the grocery store to punch cards at your local coffee house, retailers have found countless ways to recognize and reward customers for repeat purchases. Airlines and hotel chains are widely considered pioneers when it comes to rewarding customer loyalty, and they have offered such programs as a way to reward repeat customers and add value to their companies' products and services.

Your golf course might even have a program in place as a way to increase player satisfaction and ensure their continued patronage. Within the past 10 years, course maintenance manufacturers have created ways to reward superintendents for their loyalty as well.

The Syngenta GreenPartners program is a good example of the new generation of loyalty programs for course operators. Superintendents making Syngenta purchases accrue points automatically. The points can be redeemed for new course equipment or used to provide promotional rewards for employees.

"Loyalty programs offered by golf course equipment and supply companies are a relatively new phenomenon," notes Syngenta Loyalty Marketing Manager Norman Barclift. Syngenta started its program for golf courses in 1999 and "the program has been very well received," Barclift adds. Other chemical companies also offer loyalty programs, such as the Bayer Accolades program, which was introduced in 2000.

"Our program offers great flexibility," Barclift says. "Points can be used to reward employees. Courses can redeem points for supplies to run their course operations or to help pay for employee trips to national and regional conferences.

"Courses can even donate points to professional associations, such as the GCSAA or a specific local chapter," Barclift adds. "It is a great way to help local associations and has proven very popular."

*The "Tip of the Month" is provided by Syngenta to support superintendents in their agronomic, business and professional development. To comment on this column, submit a lesson from your own experience, or suggest a topic to be covered in a future issue, please visit [www.golfbusinesstips.com](http://www.golfbusinesstips.com).*

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## Business briefs

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### BASF Hires Turf Director

BASF Agricultural Products appointed Paul Rea director of its Specialty Products

Division. The division consists of three businesses within BASF, including professional pest control, professional turf & ornamentals and professional vegetation management.

Paul has been with BASF for more than six years. His most recent assignment was director of regional marketing for North America. Prior to that, he was involved in the company's divestiture of the Microflo business and global marketing efforts for BASF's line of herbicides.

"Paul's background and experience will prove invaluable as we move forward with our Specialty Products Division," Group Vice President Markus Heldt said in a prepared statement. "His key focus will be working closely with his management team and their respective customers within pest control, turf & ornamentals and vegetation management to ensure continued mutual success."

### Aquatrols Teams With GEE

Paulsboro, N.J.-based Aquatrols recently announced it has become the third Technical Supporter of Golf Environment Europe (GEE) and sponsor of GEE's Environmental Innovation and Technology Network. In so doing, the company says it has set out its commitment to support environmental education and information exchange within and beyond European golf.

Aquatrols said its support of the Innovation and Technology Network will initially facilitate the production of a new Environmental Resource Centre (ERC) for European golf. Through the ERC, Aquatrols will help collate and disseminate practical information that assists practitioners in achieving greater water use efficiency and conservation in their turf management activities. ■

# Tackling the Bedrock of Bermuda

GEORGIA IRRIGATION CONSULTANT TAKES ON PROJECT **By Luke Frank**

*Editor's note: Golfdom is partnering with the American Society of Irrigation Consultants (ASIC) to publish a quarterly column on irrigation success stories in the golf industry on behalf of its members. This is the inaugural column.*

**I**rrigation Consultant Services (ICS) in Conyers, Ga., recently concluded a complete irrigation overhaul of the century-old Belmont Hills Golf Club in Warwick, Bermuda. A fabulous golf refuge for the Northeast's gentry over the past 75 years, the course was in need of some serious upgrades. ICS's Bob Scott identified three specific areas of concentration:

#### Water Resource Development:

The toughest part of the design was addressing the limited water resources. The existing supply was 50,000 gallons a day of brackish water, so Scott had to develop additional resources.

Stuck with a brackish water source, ICS implemented reverse-

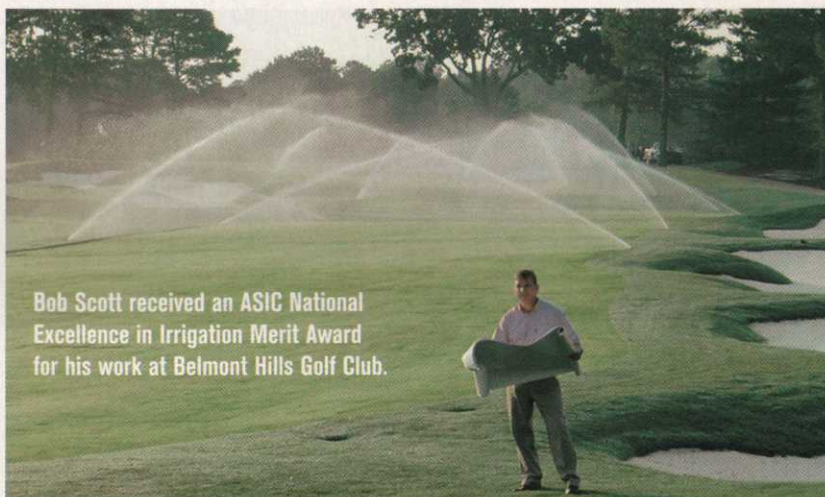
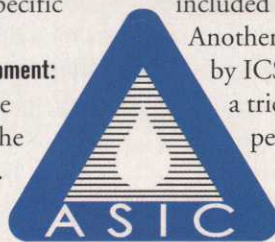
osmosis desalination to make it suitable for irrigation, and then supplemented that with two half-million-gallon tanks to capture annual rainfall (about 50 inches per year).

**Topography:** When ICS arrived onsite, the 100-year-old grounds at Belmont Manor were completely torn up, including the golf course. There was no existing irrigation piping for fairways, which lay atop solid, coral-like rock.

Scott used rock saws to carve out the irrigation system "track," laid in the piping on a sandy bed and backfilled with prepared topsoil that included the bedrock "sawdust."

Another site issue to be addressed by ICS was how to contend with a tricky windy season (30 miles per hour average).

**Irrigation Equipment:** The existing irrigation system was designed for watering greens and tees only, so ISC was tasked not only with developing water resources but stretching them to cover significantly more of the 85-acre site. Scott designed



Bob Scott received an ASIC National Excellence in Irrigation Merit Award for his work at Belmont Hills Golf Club.



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A national historic landmark, Longue Vue is located near the 17th Street Canal and is slowly working its way back to normalcy with the help of volunteers.

"After the storm, about 80 percent of our grounds were under 2 feet of water," said Amy Graham, head gardener at Longue Vue. "There was a small portion up near the house that wasn't submerged, but we also suffered severe wind damage and lost a number of trees along with a significant portion of our tree canopy."

After Katrina, 60 percent of Longue Vue's plants were lost to flooding and wind damage, and Graham, the only one of five gardeners to return to make her home in New Orleans, was left to tackle a six-month clean-up process. RISE volunteers worked under Graham's guidance during an afternoon of weeding, replanting, raking, maintaining and restoring the gardens according to the original 1934 plan.

One day and one plant at a time, Longue Vue is beginning to resemble the garden it was in its heyday, but full restoration is a goal still set in the distant future. ■

a pump station to integrate all water sources and efficiently operate within specific watering windows.

Next was a complete overhaul of the sprinkler design — realigning sprinklers and adding zones designed to address wind and sun exposures and runoff through aggressive programming based on real-time weather inputs. Sprinkler zones were designed specifically to interact with on-site wind and rain sensors to improve performance.

According to Scott, the final key to this project's success was to pull local talent into the project early.

"The system is unique, so we

**Quotable**

**"At least 36 states will be experiencing water shortages by 2013."**  
— Wayne Nastri, Administrator for the Environmental Protection Agency's Southwest Region.

**"He was one of a kind as a person."**  
— Steve Forrest, president of the American Society of Golf Course Architects (ASGCA), on the death of Ed Seay, who was Arnold Palmer's longtime golf course design partner and a popular man in industry circles.

**"Karen 'Kick the Activists in the' Reardon."**  
— ESPN's Chris Berman-ism given to Karen Reardon, communications director for the Responsible Industry for a Sound Environment, an association that represents pesticide and fertilizer companies.

wanted local crews to be fully trained in operations and maintenance," he says. "Those who use it need to feel in possession of it. Most of the locals are little older and consider themselves true craftsmen, so there was a lot of pride in system performance."

Belmont Hills Golf Club's irrigation system design and operation has proven so successful that Scott and ICS received an ASIC National Excellence in Irrigation Merit Award. ■

*Frank is the communications manager of the American Society of Irrigation Consultants.*

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— Lessley Boyd  
Carter Plantation  
Springfield, LA

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