

Off The Fringe

Business briefs

Rounds Down in March, As Is Consumer Confidence

Is it a coincidence that golf rounds played were down nearly 10 percent from the previous year at the same time that consumer confidence has been sinking?

Rounds played in the United States were down 9.9 percent on same-store basis in March 2008 versus March 2007, according to the National Golf Foundation. Even with one extra weekend day in March versus last year, most regions doing relatively high volume in the month were down: Central/South Florida fell 3.1 percent; the Gulf Coast declined 1.8 percent, and South Central showed a 8.5 percent decline.

Consumer confidence has experienced a similar slump. The Conference Board Consumer Confidence Index, which had declined sharply in March, fell further in April. The Index now stands at 62.3, down from 65.9 in March. The Present Situation Index fell to 80.7 from 90.6. The Expectations Index was virtually unchanged, 50.1 versus 49.4 in March.

Home Depot Canada Phases Out Pesticides

Even though it's another country and another segment of the green industry, golf course superintendents should know that Home Depot Canada plans to voluntarily stop selling traditional pesticides and herbicides in its stores across Canada by the end of 2008 and increase its selection of environmentally friendly alternatives.

"Like our customers, we at The Home Depot, are concerned about the environment," said Annette Verschuren, president

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What's That Racket?

OH, IT'S JUST ANOTHER DAY AT TORO – WHERE THEY'RE 'THINKING WAY OUT THERE' **By Larry Aylward, Editor in Chief**

Several media members got to witness a lot of racket going on at The Toro Co. last month. We're talking clatter as in "clang," "boom," "bam" and even "ping."

Actually, it was just another day at Toro, located in Bloomington, Minn., where mowers and blowers and other equipment are tested extensively for durability, performance and safety among other things. And the tests, like placing a solid metal pipe underneath the cutting unit of

a fairway mower, cause some clatter.

The media were given a tour of the Toro facilities as part of the company's media day, titled "Innovation At Its Roots." In addition to seeing the rigor that Toro's equipment is put through before it goes to market, the media also heard from several company speakers, including CEO and Chairman

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Toro's Greg Janey talks to media members about the Reelmaster 5210 during media day.



PHOTO BY: LARRY AYLWARD

Off The Fringe

Clemans' Travels

OREGON GCSA EXECUTIVE
DIRECTOR'S CAREER PATH HAS
TAKEN HIM ALL OVER THE GLOBE

By Larry Aylward, Editor in Chief

*I've been everywhere, man
I've been everywhere, man
Crossed the deserts bare, man
I've breathed the mountain air, man
Of travel I've had my share, man
I've been everywhere*

The legendary Johnny Cash could've written this hit song about Allan Clemans, the executive director of the Oregon Golf Course Superintendents Association. The 42-year-old Clemans has been all over the world. And he's not done globe trotting yet.

For the past 12 years, Clemans has settled in Sisters, Ore., where he lives with his wife, Cheryl. Clemans, who joined the Oregon GCSA in 1996, works out of his house. He took over the job from his father, Don, in 2000 after assisting him in the role for four years. Twelve years is the longest Clemans has lived in one spot for one time.

Clemans began traveling the country as a kid. His dad was a golf course superintendent, and Clemans remembers Don moving the family several times when he went from job to job. Clemans was born in St. Louis. He lived in Columbus, Detroit and Indianapolis when his dad held superintendents' jobs in those cities. Because of Allan's asthma, Don moved the family to a less-humid climate, specifically Cody, Wyo., where he took the job as superintendent of Olive Glenn Country Club. Clemans

joined his dad's maintenance crew soon after the move. He became the night waterman when he was 15.

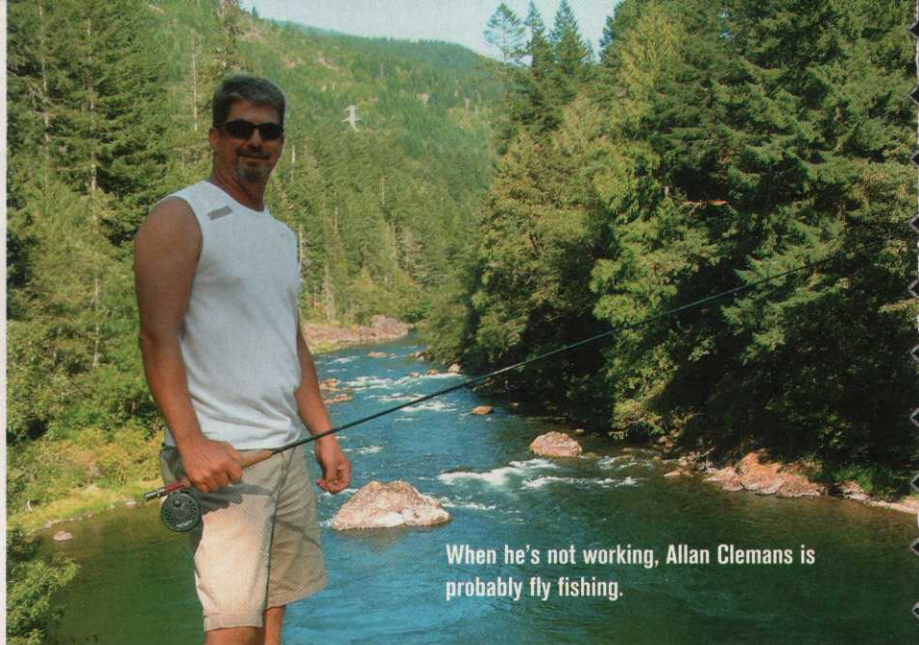
"I worked on the golf course every summer until I graduated from high school," Clemans says. "But my dad told me that if I really wanted to get into this business, I'd need more work experience than just working for him."

So Clemans hit the road the day after graduating from high school to work at the Country Club of Colorado Springs. It was difficult to leave his family and friends in Cody, but Clemans learned how to live on his own, which would come in handy later on.

"Moving around as a kid made me less fearful to move around as an adult," he says.

That fall, Clemans returned to Cody to attend the University of Wyoming, where he was a soil science major. It was 1985, and Clemans' dad left Olive Glenn to become the superintendent at Black Wolf Run, Pete Dye's new design in Kohler, Wis. When the school year ended, Clemans went to Kohler to work with his dad again. But company rules — Wisconsin's wealthy and successful Kohler family owns Black Wolf Run — prohibited family members working directly for family members. So Clemans took a job on Dye's construction crew.

"I learned how to dig ditches and handle a lot of railroad ties," he says. "It was hard work and long hours."



When he's not working, Allan Clemans is probably fly fishing.

Clemans didn't know it at the time, but his career in golf course construction was about to kick into high gear. Clemans found himself in the driver's seat of a tractor and was trained how to finish grades on tees and subgrades.

Clemans was also about to become a traveling man. He went to Florida to build a course and then to North Carolina to build another one. And then he went back to Michigan State University to get his degree. When Clemans had the chance to intern with Robert Trent Jones Sr. while a student at MSU, he jumped at it. Upon his graduation in 1987, Jones' construction company offered him a full-time job for \$22,500 and benefits, including insurance, travel and housing expenses.

Clemans' boss was Roger Rulewich, a golf course architect under Jones. "I really enjoyed working for Roger because he was a true teacher," Clemans says.

Clemans worked as a shaper. Within six months of joining Robert Trent Jones, he was traveling overseas. Clemans was only 23, but he was making a name for himself. Within 18 months, he grew experienced enough to handle a remodeling job on his own.

Clemans worked for Jones for 10 years. In that time he saw the country and the world. Clemans went to Ireland, Wales, Scotland, France, New Zealand, Egypt, Kenya, Japan and the Dominican Republic, among other

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of The Home Depot Canada and Asia. "We are going above and beyond government regulations by working with our suppliers to develop pesticide alternatives that are environmentally friendly and produce excellent results on lawns and gardens."

Pesticides will be phased out of The Home Depot stores across Canada starting immediately. By the end of June, The Home Depot anticipates that 62 of its stores nationwide will no longer sell pesticides, with all 166 stores offering additional environmentally preferred replacement products by the end of 2008.

Cleary Makes Appointments

Dayton, N.J.-based Cleary Chemical Co. made two key appointments. Pedro Perdoma has been hired as director of research and regulatory affairs, and Bill Cunningham was promoted to director of marketing.

Perdoma is responsible for all aspects of product research as well as federal regulatory affairs concerning the turf and ornamental industry. In his new role, Cunningham will manage all outside marketing efforts including directing all advertising efforts.

Companies Settle Lawsuits of Bayer's Patent

Bayer CropScience LP, Etigra LLC and Nufarm Americas, as successor to the assets of Etigra, and Control Solutions, announced that the companies have settled lawsuits regarding infringement of Bayer's patent for the pesticide imidacloprid on fertilizer. The parties have acknowledged that Bayer's patent is valid and enforceable. Etigra has acknowledged the validity of Bayer's copyrights. Etigra, Control Solutions and Frick Services are endeavoring to recall infringing imidacloprid product.

Bayer filed suit in February 2008 against Control Solutions in the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of North Carolina citing infringement of U.S. Patent No. 5,783,203. Bayer's litigation in regard to Etigra's actions was filed in the same U.S. district court in March 2007. ■

About Your Maintenance Budget

IS IT GOING UP WITH GOLFERS' DEMANDS?

By Larry Aylward, Editor in Chief

Considering that overall golf course conditions are what golfers value most when they shell out their hard-earned cash to play 18 holes, the proof is in the putting greens that superintendents are the most important employees that golf courses and golf clubs employ.

Golf course superintendents should feel proud. Then again, they probably feel pressure, which is understandable. They know their work is being scrutinized.

But in these days of near-flat rounds and stagnant growth, one wonders if superintendents' maintenance budgets are keeping pace with the increased scrutiny of their courses, which might include golfers' demands for faster- and more consistent-playing greens and more forgiving bunkers to provide firm lies. The bottom line is the bottom line, and superintendents might need more money in their maintenance budgets to perform some of the tasks to meet golfers' demand.

We've surveyed superintendents the past several years in regard to their maintenance budgets, which are going up for some and down for others.



In 2003, we asked: **What do you think your maintenance budget will be in 2004?**

Here's how 325 superintendents responded:

■ Up 15 percent or more	5%
■ Up 5 percent or more	37%
■ Same	41%
■ Down 5 percent or more	13%
■ Down 15 percent or more	4%

In 2005, we asked: **What do you think your maintenance budget will be in 2006?**

Here's how 380 superintendents responded:

■ Up 15 percent or more	6%
■ Up 5 percent or more	46%
■ Same	30%
■ Down 5 percent or more	13%
■ Down 15 percent or more	4%

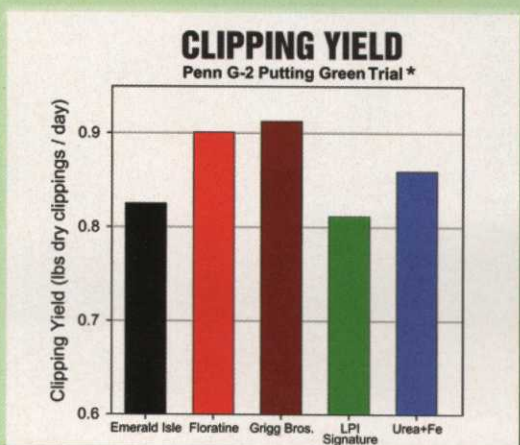
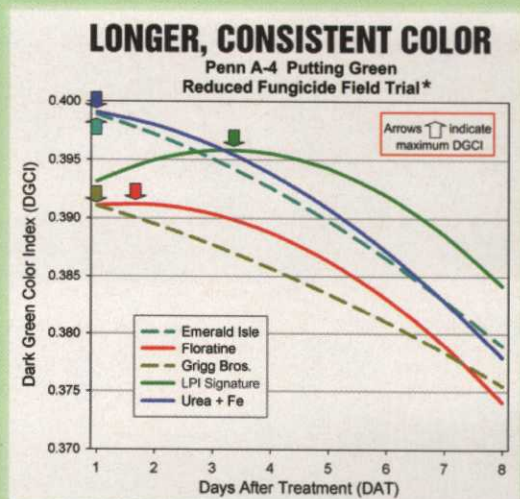
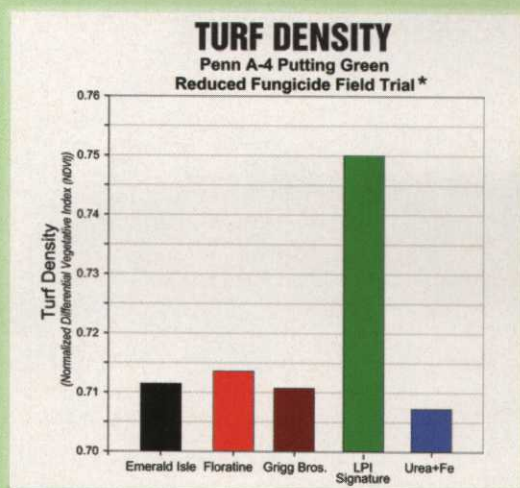
In 2007, we asked: **What do you think your maintenance budget will be in 2008?**

Here's how 637 superintendents responded:

■ Up 15 percent or more	6%
■ Up 5 percent or more	43%
■ Same	40%
■ Down 5 percent or more	9%
■ Down 15 percent or more	3%

For more business insights, sign up for our *On the Green* and *Chipshots* newsletters at www.golfdom.com.

Signature® Foliar Fertilizers Deliver Consistent Results



* Max Schlossberg, Ph.D (PSU), 2007.



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Off The Fringe

Grub Busters

SILCOX DISCUSSES MODERN APPROACH IN DEALING
WITH THE TURF-DAMAGING INSECT



Chuck Silcox knows a thing or two about grub control. *Golfdom* Editor in Chief Larry Aylward recently spoke to Silcox, the global turf and ornamental product development manager for DuPont Professional Products, on the topic. Silcox is an industry veteran of 25 years and has been at DuPont for five years. He has a Ph.D. from Rutgers University.

Golfdom: It's spring but not too early for a superintendent's thoughts to turn to grub control. That said, what should superintendents be thinking about in regard to grub control right now?

Silcox: I don't think it's ever too early to think about grub control. It's interesting to think where we have been in the past 20 years with grub control. Twenty years ago, grub control was primarily an August and September endeavor. And then in the early 1990s, with the introduction of imidacloprid (Merit) by Bayer Environmental Science, the benefit of a preventive application became in vogue. As time has gone by, it seems more superintendents are seeing the value of an earlier application in May. They're taking advantage of the moist soil conditions that are present in the spring. The enemy of preventive grub control of any product is dry soil and particularly dry thatch. And by going with an earlier season application, you can overcome some of those difficulties.

Golfdom: In what parts of the country do grubs pose most problems on golf courses?

Silcox: Traditionally, the heart of the grub country is been the Midwest and Northeast. That's not to say that grubs aren't elsewhere. You have *Ataenius* on in Northern California, and you have May and June beetles in Texas. The Southeast also has its share of grub problems. But the real heart of grub country are the Midwest and Northeast states.

Golfdom: On what parts of golf courses are grubs most problematic and how severe is the damage they can cause?

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“Silcox” — Continued from page 16

Silcox: The damage can be very severe. When you’re talking grub control, you’re talking about treating a lot of acres because typically its fairways and roughs — the roughs primarily to prevent animal damage in the fall from skunks, raccoons and crows digging up the turf while looking for grubs. Turf can withstand a lot of grubs if it has adequate moisture. But one of the problems a superintendent also faces is if he’s got a grub population developing, and they’re getting into second and third instars in August and September and all of the sudden the weather dries out and that damage starts to show.

Golfdom: How can superintendents monitor grub populations?

Silcox: In the spring ... if you can dig down 4 or 6 inches and find grubs, you know you had a problem in the past year. So odds are that turf will become infested this year. It also depends if a superintendent has been on his course for a long time. If so, he’s going to understand where his hot spots are and where his problems are and also what species of grub of which he typically deals.

Golfdom: Some of the newer insecticides, including DuPont’s Acelepryn, are classified as reduced-risk insecticides by the Environmental Protection Agency. What constitutes a reduced-risk insecticide?

Silcox: The program was initiated back in the early 1990s by the EPA in a way to give industry incentive to develop new products that have characteristics they think are favorable. There are a number of ways a product can be classified as reduced risk. It can have a lower impact on human health, a lower toxicity on non-target organisms, lower potential groundwater contamination, low use rates, low resistance potential and it’s compatible with integrated pest management programs. ■

“Toro” — Continued from page 10

Mike Hoffman, Director of Center for Advanced Turf Technology Dana Lonn, Vice President of Operations Sandy Meurlot and others.

Being a major player in irrigation — more than 20 percent of Toro’s revenues come from it — a big topic of the day was water management. And considering that freshwater supplies are dwindling, Toro’s speakers had a lot to say about the topic.

“The fact is, water is becoming the new oil,” Hoffman said. “It’s no longer considered a commodity. It’s considered a precious resource — and it’s getting more and more expensive. We need to manage water much more carefully.”

Lonn, who has worked at Toro for almost 39 years and is considered a top industry researcher, delved into the many things that Toro is doing to help golf course superintendents irrigate more efficiently. Lonn talked about the company’s aim to develop sprinklers that mimic the distribution uniformity of rainfall. He also talked about climate-based irrigation controls to combat such things as solar evapora-

“A lot of what we’re driving at is to get more precise.”

DANA LONN

tion and wind, micro-irrigation and soil-sensor technology.

“A lot of what we’re driving at is to get more precise,” Lonn said. “And you get more precise by measuring.”

Lonn also expanded on future technology as it pertains to alternate fuels, such as fuel cells, bio-diesel and electric power. Lonn likes the latter, saying electric energy amounts to



Toro CEO and Chairman Mike Hoffman makes a point during the company's media day in May.

lower and even zero emissions, fewer wear parts and less noise. But he said electric fuel is not yet feasible because it’s too heavy. For instance, 800 pounds of lead-acid batteries supply as much power as only 1 gallon of gas, which weighs about 8 pounds.

Overall, Lonn said Toro’s customers voice a similar request: They all want improved and more efficient products, but not at an increased price.

“They say, ‘Don’t change them much. Just give them to us better, faster and cheaper,’” Lonn said.

But Hoffman realizes that meeting such challenges abound in this ever-changing world.

Certainly, change is accelerating,” Hoffman stated. “And a lot of the change we’ve seen over the last 15 years is happening in shorter durations, of which we have to be prepared. We are thinking way out there. So as this change accelerates, we can be in a position to help our customers. There’s a lot more learning that’s going to go on.” ■

Off The Fringe

"Clemans" — *Continued from page 12*

places. He once watched the British Open from the Old Course Hotel's balcony overlooking The Road Hole at St. Andrews. He rode a train along the Nile River.

But as a road warrior, Clemans didn't have a home. He stored his possessions in Montgomery, Ala., for years. He was once told he'd be going abroad for four to six months and he came back 28 months later.

"I had girlfriends here and there," he says, "but they all understood these were short-lived relationships."

When he was back in the states working, Clemans drove throughout the country from job site to job site and lived in those cities for short periods. When people asked him where he lived, he didn't know what to tell them. "I was never in a place long enough to establish a residency," he says.

But the travel began to wear on him. Clemans grew tired of the long workweeks, sometimes 80 to 90 hours. Sometimes he didn't even cash his paychecks because there was no time to spend any money. He lost track of time.

"One day someone said Happy Easter to me in the grocery store," Clemans recalls. "I didn't even know it was Easter."

Clemans, who was pushing 30, began to wonder if his life was passing him by. He was also losing his zest for the job.

"I started wondering if I was going to be a really neat old fart with lots of stories — but nobody to tell them to," he says.

He decided to quit. He moved to Bend, Ore., where his parents were now living. Clemans also liked the outdoors, and Oregon offers everything from mountains to forests to high lakes to the ocean. Clemans bought few possessions with him when he moved, but he did bring a canoe, a tent and a fly rod.

"I didn't know what I wanted to do, but I decided to stay," he says. "I also wanted to find someone to share my life with."

One thing he knew for sure is he didn't want to work for a while. "After working 80 to 90 hour weeks for 10 years ... I wanted to take some time off," he says. "I had money in the bank to do so."

At that time, Clemans' dad, who had retired from being a superintendent after nearly 30 years, was managing a few local superintendent associations. He had just taken on another association job shortly after Clemans returned. "He had bitten off more than he could chew," Clemans says.

Clemans began helping his dad and ended up succeeding him as executive director of the Oregon GCSA. While in Bend, he met his wife, Cheryl. They moved to Sisters, a town of about 700, and live in a log cabin by the mountains with their three dogs. One of the first things Clemans did after moving in the cabin was shape a small golf hole in his yard.

"I love my job," Clemans says. "It's wonderful to hang out with golf course superintendents and listen to their problems, and see if I can help them. I feel like they're all part of my family."

Quotable

"I don't want some mom whose son may have recently died to see the commander in chief playing golf. I feel I owe it to the families to be in solidarity as best as I can with them. And I think playing golf during a war just sends the wrong signal."

— *President George W. Bush, who has given up the game the past several years to acknowledge the sacrifice of soldiers and their families. (CBS News)*

"In order for golf to grow, we need to embrace the public player."

— *Golf course architect Rees Jones on the importance of holding the U.S. Open at a municipal venue such as Torrey Pines.*

Clemans, an avid fisherman, keeps his fly rod in the back of his car. When he's driving through the mountains, sometimes he'll pull over and cast his line in a trout stream and fish for a few hours

It's a slower pace, but Clemans doesn't regret the time he spent working himself to the bone. He was able to see the world and have a big hand in building some great golf courses.

And Clemans is not done. In April he announced he's leaving the Oregon GCSA to take a job in Portugal. Clemans is getting back in the bulldozer seat and will build a few golf courses for Rulewich in Evora, Portugal. Clemans leaves July 1, and he and Cheryl and their dogs will live in Portugal for three to five years.

"I've been dreaming about the dirt rolling off the corner of a bulldozer blade for 10 years," says Clemans, who realized he misses the construction part of the business. "I love building golf courses and putting my personal mark on something that could possibly be here for 200 to 300 years."

Clemans' advice to up-and-comers thinking of following a similar career path is to follow their heart's desire.

"Be careful, but have fun and definitely go for it," he says. "It's such a great experience, and you'll never forget it. You'll realize what a great world we live in."

Clemans should know. He's been everywhere, man. ■