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FEATURES

Senior citizens: golden opportunity for the golf business

New GOLF BUSINESS Advisory Board member Gene Burress, CGCS, outlines the growth he's seen in senior golf and sketches a rosy picture for its future 16

Nature and architecture combine to create quiet Florida resort

Grenelefe, in central Florida, just opened a new 18 holes. Assistant Editor Scott Scredon was there to cover the event, and returned with a profile of the entire golf operation 18

Up-to-date irrigation greens up 60-year-old club

Atlanta's prestigious Capitol City Country Club never looked so good as it has since the installation of an automatic 550-sprinkler irrigation system 24

Tennis: the 20th hole

Private golf clubs can find it hard to survive these days without something beyond the first 19 holes. Here's one example of what can be done to fill the roster 28

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The old pro

Are course finances a mystery to pros?

I'm hoping that the PGA and GCSAA educational programs teach the pros and course superintendents far more than they now know about club and public course financial statements. The clubhouse managers now know a fair amount about finances because the books are kept in the clubhouse office. Those clubs that have services of accountants specializing



in club and hotel auditing may give the managers extended financial education the pros and superintendents do not get.

Sales and other income taxes that made me hire an auditor began the schooling that developed me as a sound golf businessman. If money doesn't teach you a business lesson, you are not a golf businessman.

Some club officials who are extraordinary successful in their own businesses need to learn plenty about golf club business. An illuminating experience would be to compare the figures on how much the club nets out of its rental cars with car revenue the club members own. But what club officials would risk civil war by trying to bring rental and owner car figures to balance?

For years I've heard members of clubs complain that the annual dues, locker, club storage, and cleaning charges all fall on members about the time real estate taxes, Christmas bills, and income taxes are due. But I've never heard of anything done to spread the payments. Maybe the club costs during the playing months in the north and central states don't allow much space for easing the annual items.

Something else that puzzled me as well, what was done to make the most of the interest-producing opportunities of the big payments that are made to the club in January, and how part of this revenue is used to save money for the club by paying installments on its own borrowing.

The financial picture of public course operations as compared with other public utilities are as mysteries to any professional I know. I wonder if park superintendents and other public officials have much of an idea about the money side of public golf operations. I suppose the fee course pro ought to let the owner of the course worry about the finances, including taxes.

I have second guessed myself into the opinion, though, that a reason golf pros don't make the money they should be making in their business is because they don't know enough about money in golf business.

Idea file

Resort courses profit from booklet

Resort golf course managers may be interested in "Accu-Shot," a 7- by 4¼-inch color booklet that provides a detailed map of trees, sand traps, and yardage from different locations on each hole on the course.

For example, the booklet shows a golfer that the fourth hole at Torrey Pines South course in San Diego measures 424 yards for men. But it is 202 yards from the front of the tee to the front lip of the second trap in the right rough. From the back of that trap, it is 176 yards to the front of the green.

Playing guests and persons in the gallery of major tournaments can use the booklet. Maps are drawn from photographs taken from a helicopter. The booklets are published and sold by Western Specialty Publications, Inc., 4501 Mission Bay Dr., Suite 1E, San Diego, CA 92109.

Custom cards increase leagues and outings

John W. Urban uses a highly successful method of increasing league and outing business at his Urban Hills Country Club, a semi-private facility in Richton Park, Ill. Every year he contacts from 60 to 70 companies in his area to solicit their participation in golf leagues and outings at his course. One of the things he offers: special scorecards imprinted with the name of the company or league. The cost of this little extra touch, he says, is more than offset by the increase in business.

Serving Coke? Be sure it's "the real thing"

If the bar, restaurant, or snack bar at your golf course serves a cola drink other than Coca-Cola, you'd better train your waiters, waitresses, and bartender to say so when a customer asks for "Coke".

Coca-Cola Co., afraid that its Coke trademark might go the way of "escalator" or "aspirin", has a team of 25 investigators who roam the country, ordering "Coke" to see what they get. They send test samples back to corporate headquarters in Atlanta, and if what you served was something other than the real thing, you may be sued. About 800 retailers, including Howard Johnson's have been sued for passing off other brands of cola as Coke without telling their customers.

According to the Wall Street Journal, Coca-Cola Co. spends more than \$2 million per year to operate this Trade Research Department — so you know they're serious about it.

A major tournament for average players

Nearly 2,000 golfers competed last year in the Met Net, a tournament sponsored by the Metropolitan Golf Association for those players with 8 to 24 handicaps.

The federation of 209 clubs on Long Island and in northern New Jersey, New York City, and four surrounding counties paired two-man teams who could use their handicaps. Each club selected two players after qualifying rounds from April 29 to May 30. Further competition reduced the field to 60 players who battled for the title June 21.

The final event was an armchair golfer's dream, featuring roving rules officials and large scoreboards.

Pro and superintendent must communicate

Most people in the golf business now appreciate the value of cooperation and communication between the golf professional and the course superintendent. In the most basic terms, the pro needs to know what's going on on the course, and the pro can tell the superintendent about problems he sees on the course.

Joe Black, treasurer of the PGA of America and head pro at Brookhaven Country Club in Dallas, told superintendents at the GCSAA convention in February how he and his course's superintendent, Quinton Johnson, do it.

First, they have coffee together at 10:00 every Sunday morning when both are in town. Second, they both attend full department head meetings every Thursday afternoon. Third, they meet once a year and review the entire 54-hole facility hole by hole, discussing what changes they would like to make. Black notes that the pro can be instrumental in helping the superintendent "sell" course changes to the board or management and to get more money for course maintenance.

Another good idea, Black noted, is for the pro and the superintendent to play their course together periodically.

A golf superintendent

Comparing budgets

As you examine the results of various course maintenance surveys, please remember that practically every golf club has a different objective when it comes to a standard of course maintenance. Thus, as Bob Williams noted in a discussion of efficiency and course maintenance, "let us be mindful that we have to adjust the shoe to fit the foot. Few statements can be made to apply to the majority of cases. No standard can be set to apply to all of our clubs."

Should we really compare budgets after all? William Bengeyfield, director of the Western Region of the USGA Green Section once noted that "it doesn't really matter if a superintendent's answer to this question is NO! It doesn't really matter if we respond in the firmest possible way. The fact is — budgets and golf courses will be compared by club officials — always! When it comes to economic matters, man must be logical. He must standardize, make a formula, figure the percentages. This is his nature."

Golf courses are entirely dissimilar. They cannot be standardized, do not fit any formula. Their value, beauty and enjoyment depend on their individuality. This is their nature.

An impasse? Not if we wish otherwise. Golf is only enjoyed to the fullest when the course provides the best possible playing conditions and pleasant surroundings. Emphasis of these points in relation to the money being spent is therefore the main point. In fact, the only point! It's not what one spends — it's what one receives for it that ultimately counts.

Variables which influence the cost of golf course maintenance and should be carefully examined before comparing budgets:

1. AGE—golf course design and construction has varied considerably through the years to reduce the hand labor and to accommodate the use of modern equipment.

2. ACREAGE—the size of greens, tees, fairways, bunkers and club grounds will vary from club to club. The club maintaining 100 acres of fairway will have costs exceeding the club which maintains only 21 acres.

3. WINTER PLAY—few clubs keep greens open for play in the winter. Depending upon the quantity of play this would increase the need for spring aerification and other requirements, each increasing the cost of maintenance.

4. ANNUAL PLAY—35,000 golf rounds would create more maintenance require-

ments than the course with only 4,000 rounds of play.

5. GOLF CARS—heavy golf car usage or usage of cars during unfavorable conditions would result in the need for greater irrigation, aerification, fertilization and renovation with costs increasing proportionately.

6. GRASS VARIETIES—different species of grasses require different approaches to maintenance. Poa annua retardation programs are expensive to employ but are generally programmed in the better clubs.

7. SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS—for reasons often difficult to explain some clubs may require unique maintenance programs which would influence the cost of maintenance. For example, control programs for the Hyperodes weevil or for the Ataenius beetle are not necessary to every club in Metropolitan New York.

8. SOIL TYPES—soil influences the cost of maintenance. Clay soils will not support equipment usage under moist conditions and will generally require aerification, spiking and topdressing more than sandier soils.

9. CART PATHS & SERVICE ROADS—roads facilitate movement of equipment and labor with less lost time or wear and

continued on page 28

Ted Horton, CGCS, originally wrote this column for the Metropolitan GCSA's *Tee to Green* newsletter, of which he is co-editor. He is also superintendent at Winged Foot Golf Club in Mamaroneck, N.Y.

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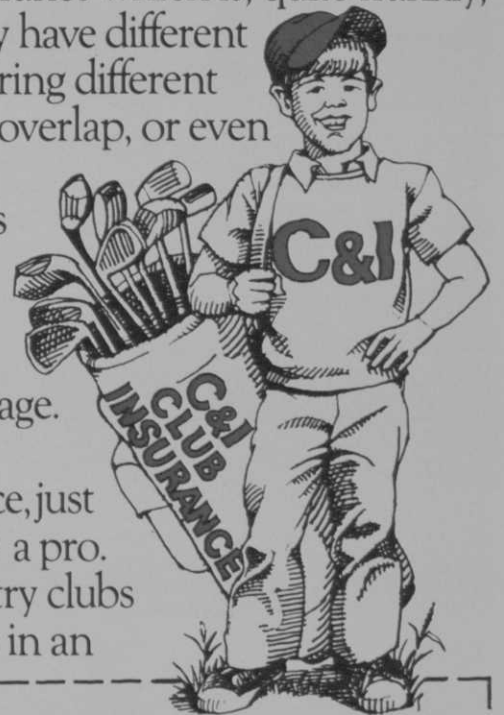
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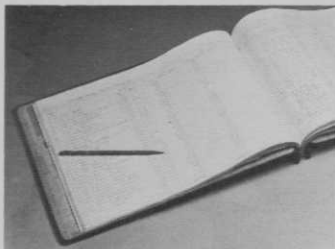
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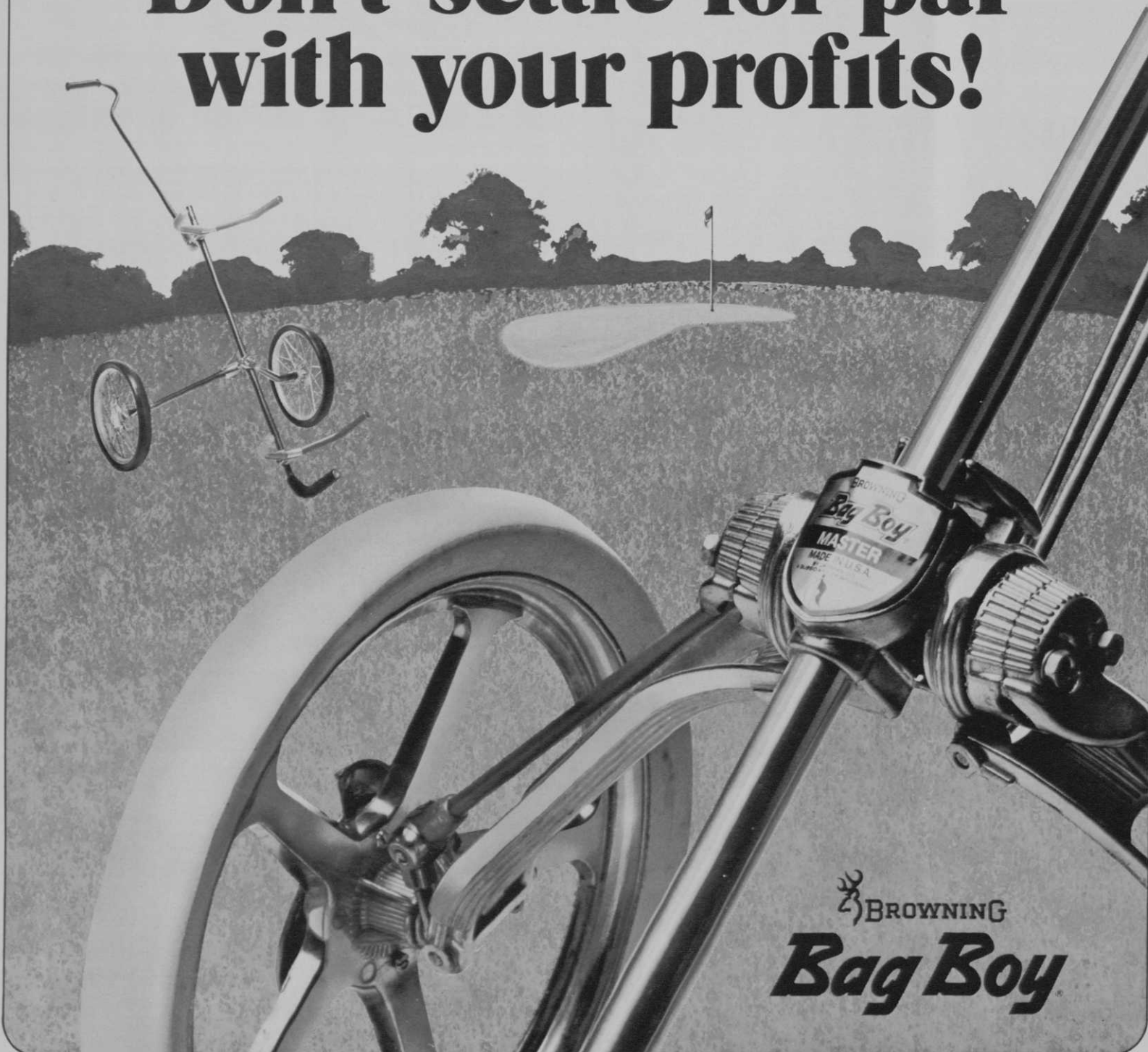
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News

GOVERNMENT & GOLF

CETA money a boon for Cinci courses

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Jobs this summer for more than one million disadvantaged youths will be funded through the federal government's Comprehensive Employment Training Act (CETA). Some municipal golf directors have hired not only summer help but filled numerous positions under the full-time CETA employment program.

Gene Burress, director of golf for the city of Cincinnati's seven golf courses, has received approval from the city administration for 26 summer positions. About half of the 14-21-year-olds will work at concession stands and the others will help with course maintenance. Those in maintenance positions will cut cups, rake traps, and perform other work that allows full-time workers more time for their

important duties.

But the full-time CETA program has been the biggest boon for Burress. The city has provided him enough money since the program began in 1973 so that 61 employees have been hired in clubhouse and maintenance positions, about 60 percent of the full-time work force. The federal government pays up to \$10,000 of each employee's salary, and Burress figures he saved about \$252,000 last year because of this feature.

Roughly 750,000 persons are working full-time under CETA, including about 450,000 new jobs since mid-May of last year when the President signed a bill allocating money for the extra jobs.

CETA allows the unskilled,

hard-core unemployed to work. Applicants must have earned little money during the previous year; a single person could only make \$2,970 and a married man with a wife and two children up to \$7,030. The person also must have been unemployed for 15 of the last 20 weeks before filling out an application.

Burress said he did have trouble finding competent help when the program was started. Only eight of the 31 employees originally hired are still working today. The majority of those no longer there were fired.

"There are a lot of positive features to the program, but a lot of negative, too," said Burress. "We've had a helluva a discipline problem with the unemployed. A lot

HONORS & AWARDS: (top row) Dr. C. Reed Funk, Rutgers University turfgrass breeder, received The Lawn Institute's Award of Merit from President Doyle Jacklin. Elected to the Oklahoma Turfgrass Research Foundation Hall of Fame were Omer Hagar, Robert James, and James B. "Montie" Moncrief.



(middle row) Ohio State University turfgrass students James Hesselbrock and Nick Christians were awarded GCSAA national scholarships by 1977 President Ted Woehrle. Golf superintendent Ward Swanson presented the Michigan Turfgrass Foundation Norman W. Kramer Outstanding Scholar Award to James C. Lass of Caledonia, Mich.



(bottom) The Penncross Bentgrass Growers Association's 1978 turfgrass scholarships were presented by Dr. Joseph Duich (center) at Penn State University to John B. Renner, Paul E. Wickey, Charles N. Terry, Lemar L. Melton, and Joseph M. McCabe.



of them want to work for awhile and then get back on unemployment."

Burriss, however, faults himself for not hiring more selectively during that time. His assistant now spends entire days just interviewing job applicants. He recently interviewed 15 persons for just three jobs.

Burriss feels the program "may be our salvation" because the federal government is footing the bill. It has also provided him with some extremely good employees, one who may eventually become a course superintendent. But the financial benefits can't be passed over. "We've got to participate in this program no matter how many personnel management problems we have," he says. "We can't afford not to."

Municipal golf course officials who want to find out more about the program should contact their local CETA office or call the U.S. Labor Department's Office of Information at 202/376-6905.

CLUBS

Federal contractors — can't pay club dues?

A policy memorandum that would prohibit corporations and financial institutions with federal contracts from paying employees' dues in clubs that discriminate against persons because of race, sex, or religion is being prepared by the U.S. Labor Department.

Officials of the Office of Federal Contract Compliance are also preparing instructions concerning enforcement of the policy, said James Henry, the Labor Department's assistant solicitor and top attorney for the compliance office.

He indicated he felt certain the policy would be issued, but did not know when.

Such an order would seriously affect nearly all private clubs in the United States, said Jerry Hurley, executive director of the National Club Association. He predicted that corporations would discontinue payment of member dues to avoid the loss of federal contracts.

NCA President M. E. "Bob" Meyer, Jr., said he feels the office does not have the authority to issue the policy and castigated them for not providing open discussion of the policy. "They have refused to expose it for public comment for fear they would be overruled as they were 2 years ago," Meyer said. The Justice Department

under the Ford administration claimed the order was illegal.

The Labor office feels membership in private clubs increases job opportunities and chances for promotions. Clubs that discriminate in their admissions policies, therefore would not give minorities equal chance for job advancement.

Clubs that promote women and minorities, and those that are not business-related, such as the Boy Scouts, would not be affected.

Henry said he did not know how many clubs would be affected, but indicated there would be a substantial amount. "It's kind of clear there are a large number of clubs that discriminate."

COMPANIES

Marketeer cars owned by Nordskog

The manufacturing of Marketeer golf cars has resumed with transfer in ownership from Westinghouse to Nordskog Industries, Inc. of Van Nuys, Calif.

The car's brand name is Nordco Marketeer. Production resumed March 1, said R. C. "Bob" Gray, general manager of the car factory in Redlands, Calif.

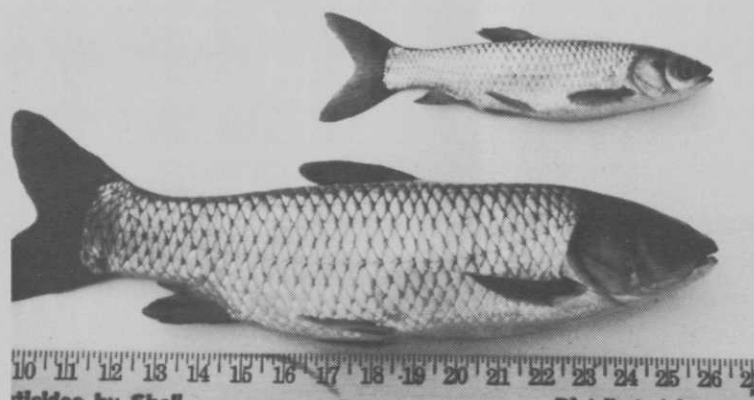
Nordskog purchased the car operation from Westinghouse on January 12, Gray said. Westinghouse had sold the operation to HMK Marketeer in January, 1976, but that firm stopped production in July, 1977. Gray said HMK ran a profitable golf car operation, but deficits in other operations forced them to turn the golf car's assets back to Westinghouse.

Gray said the Nordco Marketeer "will appear exactly as before" but there will be some changes in the steering gear and other components so the car will perform better. Nordco's Industrial Products Division has been the top sales and service agent for the car for the last 20 years.

DEALERS

Firm to distribute Yamaha golf cars

Great Lakes Golf Cars Inc. of Euclid, Ohio, will distribute the new four-wheeled Yamaha gas-powered car in that state,



The White Amur has been approved for aquatic weed control in private lakes up to 25 acres in Florida. The Aventura Country Club in North Miami Beach has saved \$20,000 annually by using the fish instead of chemicals.

according to Great Lakes President Mark Smith.

He and eight others are investors in the firm. The group includes Duff Lawrence, club pro at Canterbury Golf Club.

The group will acquaint its potential customers with demonstration units this summer and hopes to sell or lease about 1,000 cars for the 1979 season, said James Crawford, one of the investors. Smith said the car's low service requirements will be emphasized. It has separate tanks for gas and oil, thereby eliminating premixing and the need for underground storage tanks. The oil tank's capacity is 2 quarts, enough for 250 rounds without needing a check, Smith said. Yamaha has not yet set a retail price.

Other investors include Robert Fairchild, Robert Fazio, William Sebelin, David Turnbaugh, Robert McIntyre, and Dwight Crawford — all members of Canterbury.

WEED CONTROL

Fish approved to control weeds

Aquatic weed control can cost warm-season golf courses tens of thousands of dollars each year, but a decision by the Florida State Cabinet may dramatically reduce those costs and also clean up its private lakes and ponds.

Use of the White Amur, a fish native to the Peoples Republic of China, has been approved for private lakes up to 25 acres to control three different weeds. The weeds are hydrilla, Eurasian water milfoil, and Brazilian elodea.

The coarse, thick hydrilla has been causing most of the problems at ponds on Florida's courses,

giving them an unsightly appearance and bringing complaints from golfers that they were losing too many golf balls hit into the water.

Three years ago, the University of Florida began experimenting with the White Amur at the Aventura Country Club in North Miami Beach. Superintendent Dan Jones said the vegetarian fish immediately cleaned up his 42 acres of lakes, saving him \$20,000 each year in chemical weed control.

The White Amur is more efficient than other fish since it not only eats the weeds in the water, but also devours the hydrilla's small tuber that lays in the subsoil, said Dr. Al Burkhalter, chief of the bureau of aquatic plant research and control for the Florida Department of Natural Resources.

Chemicals that cost between \$100 and \$300 per acre each year do not kill the tuber and the plant can grow for up to 10 years if the tuber is living, Dr. Burkhalter said. About 10 or 12 fish are needed for each acre, which costs between \$10-25 annually, he said. The fish have not yet adapted to Western climates to be able to reproduce, yet another advantage for golf course superintendents. Jones said the fish need heavy monsoon rains and warm temperatures for reproduction, and so far have only reproduced in China and Japan with any consistency.

The fish was introduced in Arkansas about 20 years ago to control weeds that hindered fishermen and has eliminated any problems there, said Jones.

Dr. Burkhalter and Jones said that hydrilla control is quickly becoming a problem outside of the Southeast and expect it to spread it north. Dr. Burkhalter said the plant has been growing rapidly in Texas, Louisiana, and California, and Jones reported the weed growing as far north as Kentucky.