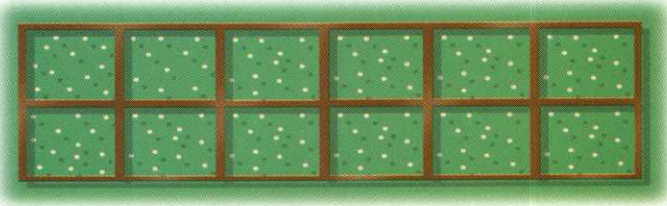


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Golfdom

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If golf balls are flying, golf course workers should be wearing hard hats, according to OSHA. But the debate continues on whether or not helmets should be required.

By Larry Aylward

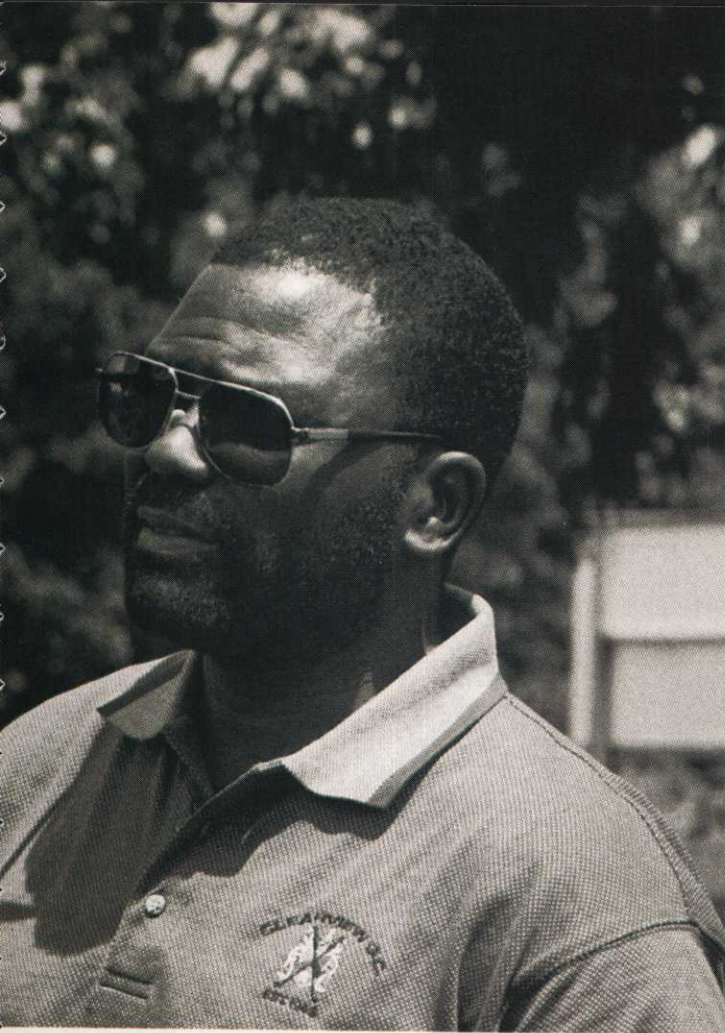


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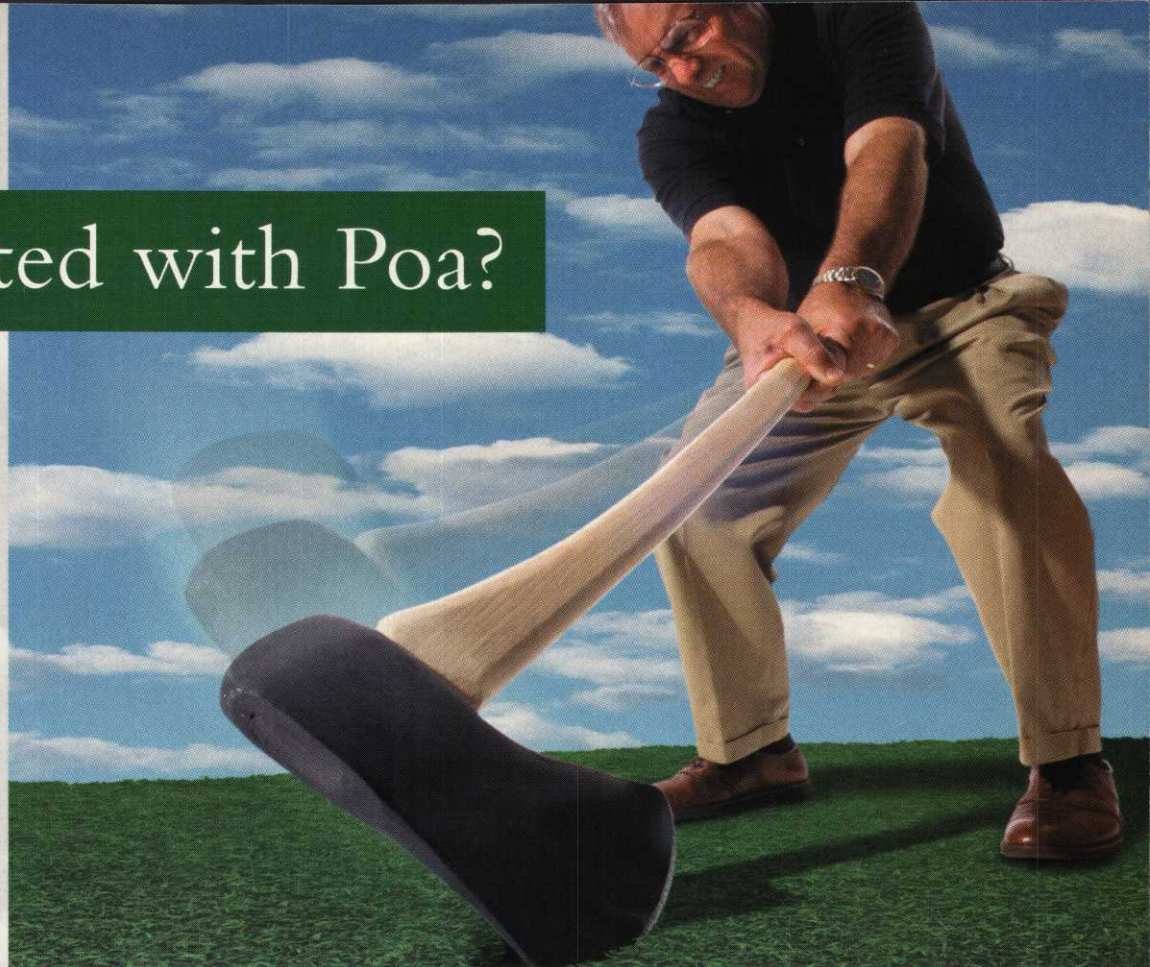
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Going Postal

■ WE'VE GOT MAIL

Writer has head in the (white) sand

If I understand Geoff Shackelford's Golf By Design column (March), golfers are captivated by and crave white bunker sand, but the golfing business should say no to their customers and stop wasting money on something they want.

After all, white sand is really unattractive and offensive to non-golfers (!?). Besides, the best courses use only natural ingredients.

I'm guessing you wrote this article at the last minute with barely time to pick a topic. Certainly, there wasn't enough time to put it through your logic checker.

If you were trying to argue for economics, you must have majored in something else. If you were arguing for good business decisions, can we quote you with your don't-give-them-what-they-want statement? If the argument was for aesthetics or traditions, it was barely evident.

A case could be made for designing golf courses with only the natural surroundings, which I assume was your intention. The rest of the article appeared to be a strained attempt to fill an obligation.

By the way: Are man-made sand traps natural? Even the golf courses themselves are man's manipulation of natural surroundings to something he thinks is more pleasing.

**Robert Lee, Member
Spring Valley Lake CC
Lakewood, Calif.**

An alternative to PDI

To understand how my proposed Career Development System can benefit all superintendents, here's what it addresses that the

GCSAA's Professional Development Initiative does not: Instead of educating ourselves to remain at a given level, CDS asks members to gain knowledge and experience to move up in the profession, earning respect for their ambition and career dedication.

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CDS has the power to change the way we do business. PDI does not.

**Al Jansen, Superintendent
Baraboo CC
Baraboo, Wis.**

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16-19 Golf Course Builders Association of America Summer Meeting
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DECEMBER

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About 10 years ago, I was driving to Florida with a couple of guys, and we were heading into Atlanta at rush hour. Rather than face the mother of all traffic jams, we decided to pull off and find a place to play a quick nine. The map showed a muni right off the highway. We found it, paid our \$15 and commenced hacking.

Three holes into the round, I sensed something was different about this course. Then it hit me: *We* were different. All of the other players were African-American. We were the only white people on the course.

This Twilight Zone role-reversal moment forced me to consider what it must be like to be one of the relatively few blacks who venture onto America's largely white courses. For a few brief minutes, I felt, as Robert Heinlein put it, like a stranger in a strange land.

The experience also made me think about our side of the game. A quick glance around the GCSAA show is all you need to confirm that blacks are a relative rarity in the profession. The actual numbers are even more startling: Of more than 15,000 class A, B or C members of the national, only 29 classify themselves as African-American.

In this month's cover story, *Golfdom's* Frank Andorka provides a groundbreaking look at the issue of race in the golf course industry. It's a thought-provoking piece that suggests we're trying harder to be more inclusive, but that we're still not making much progress toward having an industry that "looks like America."

But before you read the article, I want to pose a question: Is this push for diversity merely a new wave of political correctness or is it a business issue that warrants serious attention? Here are five reasons I believe it's the latter:

• **Law** — Suppose you're working for a company that has a contract with Atlanta to manage and maintain that golf course I wandered on to a decade ago. Atlanta has particularly strict rules about equal opportunity hiring for its contractors. If you can't find qualified minority candidates, you lose the

A Stranger in a Strange Land

BY PAT JONES



IS THIS PUSH FOR
DIVERSITY MERELY
A NEW WAVE OF
POLITICAL
CORRECTNESS OR
IS IT A BUSINESS
ISSUE?

contract — and maybe your job.

• **Labor** — Have you noticed that white suburban kids aren't too interested in seasonal jobs that pay \$7 or \$8 an hour? Having trouble filling out your summer staff? An outreach program targeting African-American or Hispanic youth could be a perfect way to accomplish your goals and round out the cultural composition of your staff.

• **Revenue** — Golf is a pastime that is passed like a torch from person to person. Every time you bring a non-white into a golf career, you help to bring them, their families and their friends into the game. The game is flat — we need more players and their wallets.

• **Regulation** — Whenever issues like local pesticide bans, wetlands usage or private club status are discussed, the fact that golf is a white man's game is always an underlying factor. When we create opportunities for non-whites, we help to counter the connection between race and other issues.

• **Reputation** — Do you really feel good about being part of a business whose only defense against cries of racism is the fact that Tiger Woods can work miracles with a stick and a ball?

In my humble opinion, this is all about enlightened self-interest — the concept that doing good for others can also be good for you. There is no reason that this industry shouldn't provide attractive career opportunities for African-Americans and other people of color. On the other hand, I've just listed five good reasons it's extremely attractive for us. Let's reach out, let's make this a priority, and let's fix this once and for all.

Pat Jones is the editor/publisher of Golfdom. He can be reached at 440-891-3126 or pjones@advanstar.com

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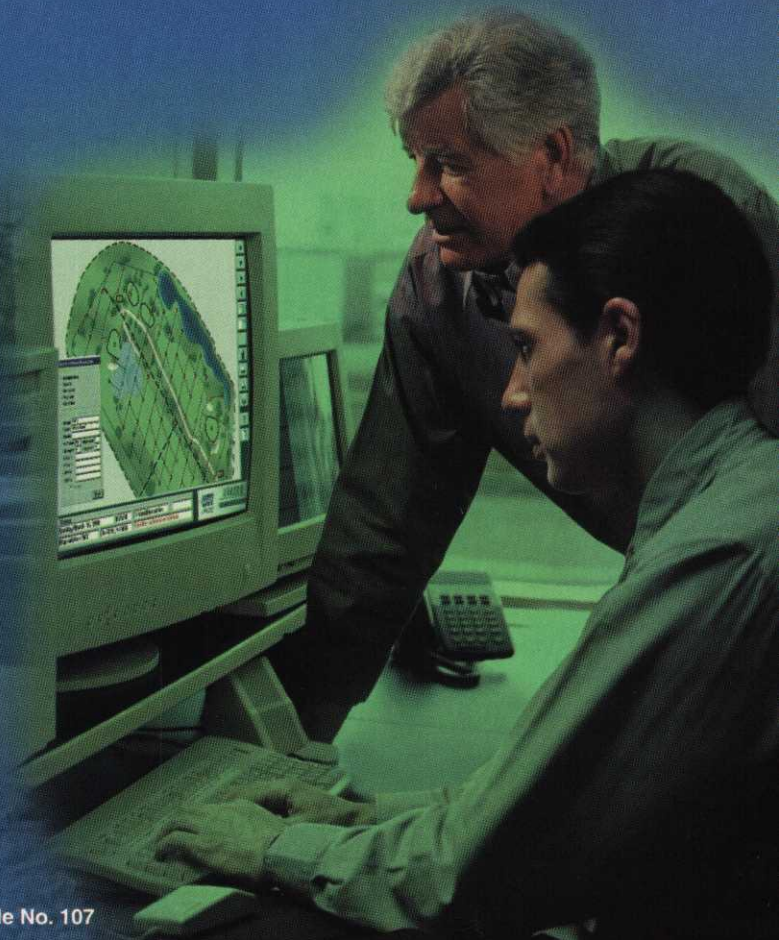


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Circle No. 107

Off The Fringe

Business briefs

ClubCorp gets bigger

Dallas-based ClubCorp just got bigger. It recently acquired the Golf Club at Cinco Ranch and Greatwood GC near Houston. ClubCorp also recently opened Links GC, Port Douglas in Queensland, Australia, the second ClubCorp facility in Australia.

IGM signs up Hunting Hills

International Golf Maintenance signed a maintenance agreement with Hunting Hills CC, an exclusive golf course community in Roanoke, Va. "Hunting Hills is known for outstanding, pure bentgrass greens," said Scott Zakany, executive vice president of Lakeland, Fla.-based IGM.

E-Z-GO extend agreements

Augusta, Ga.-based E-Z-GO Textron has renewed its multi-year agreements for utility vehicles and golf cars with American Golf Corp., which has more than 320 courses that host more than 12 million rounds of golf annually, and ClubCorp, which has more than 220 properties.

Profile acquires Conwed

Buffalo Grove, Ill.-based Profile Products LLC, a manufacturer of inorganic soil amendments and hydraulically applied mulches, recently purchased Conwed Fibers, a Conover, N.C.-based manufacturer of wood-based hydraulic mulch products.

Ewing named Hunter distributor

Phoenix-based Ewing Irrigation Products is the new Hunter Golf distributor in California, Arizona, Louisiana, Nevada, New Mexico, Oklahoma and south Texas. Ewing represents the complete Hunter Golf product line in those states, and will provide technical and field support.

Golden Opportunity

By Frank Andorka, Associate Editor

With luck, George Lynn will get more than a gold watch when he retires from The Woodstock Club in Indianapolis. He has certainly earned it.

For 50 years, Lynn kept the course in excellent playing condition for its members, and he says it will be hard for him to leave the course.

"I'm going to miss watching the sun rise in the morning over the course," says Lynn, 70. "When I'm here, I feel as if I'm home. It'll be hard to walk out of here on my last day."

The Woodstock Club, a private nine-hole course, was founded in 1915, and Lynn became superintendent in 1950. He says the best part of his job is the members turned the course over to him and let him do what he needed to do to keep it in shape. In fact, he has never worked with a budget — whenever he needed equipment or chemicals, he would go to the club president and ask for the money. It's a system that Lynn says has worked well.

"The members of this course are as fine a group of people as I've ever known," Lynn says. "I've never asked for anything unreasonable, and they've never given me any hassles."

He hasn't decided when his last day will be, but Lynn says the new superintendent shouldn't hesitate to call him for advice next spring. Lynn



George Lynn will miss sunrises, but he's looking forward to retirement.

has already received calls from his peers inquiring about the job.

"I've received a couple of calls asking me to put in a good word for them," Lynn says, laughing. "It's a great job. It's not all that stressful and the people are fabulous."

Lynn says he's looking forward to spending more time with his wife of 53 years, his five children and his 13 grandchildren.

"It's hard for me to admit, but I'm like everyone else: I've slowed down a little bit as I've gotten older," Lynn says. "I'm ready to spend some time at home."