

While golf is perhaps the most unpredictable game ever invented, Jacobsen's legendary cutting reels, blades and attachments are, without



question, the game's most consistent. Year after year, innovation after innovation, we set the stage for golf's greatest moments.



**AT 4:30 AM,  
WHEN THE WIND'S BLOWING JUST RIGHT, YOU CAN  
HEAR THE GREENS COMMITTEE SNORING.**

While you're getting an early start on the greens, it might only seem like no one is watching. But, as sure as the sun will rise, so will eyebrows, if the course isn't just right. And you know golfers, if things don't go their way, they often look for excuses. A luxury you do not have.

For over 75 years, Jacobsen has led the industry in cutting technology. (Which, in part, has protected superintendents from pointing fingers.) Complaints like "slick greens" you can live with, if

not reel in. But when golfers start missing putts on bumpy greens, they have a legitimate gripe. Our history of innovations includes the legendary Turf Groomer®. It helps create healthier, faster greens that roll true, day in and day out, which means golfers will have

no one to blame but themselves for missing putts. For more information or the nearest dealer, call 1-888-922-TURF or visit [www.ttcsp.textron.com](http://www.ttcsp.textron.com).



**JACOBSEN**  
**TEXTRON**

*Precision Cut. Legendary Performance.*

Circle No. 107



## Test of Will

Some golf holes test the mental toughness and perseverance of golfers. At the Bear Course at the Grand Traverse Resort in Acme, Mich., the 11th hole is designed to break golfers' spirits.

First, the hole lulls them into a false sense of security with its middling 364-yard length. But the par 4 turns nasty as it slowly reveals itself in shot after shot (after shot). A tight fairway, bound by houses on the left and a creek on the right, pressures golfers to make the perfect shot each time they approach the ball. If they don't, the creek, high rough and trees behind the hole are prepared to test the will of even the best golfers, says Jim Bluck, superintendent. During last year's Michigan Open, professional golfers averaged 4.3 strokes, with some taking as many as nine.

"The whole course plays tough, but No. 11 is a hole for thrill-seekers only," Bluck says. "If you can make a par on this hole, you know you've accomplished something."

The creek and the wetlands give Bluck his greatest maintenance challenges for the hole, as hard rains can cause water run-off on to the fairways. Bluck says two other challenges include fixing windows on the houses that line the left side and replacing divots that golfers gouge out of backyards after errant tee shots.

Golfdom's Hole of the Month  
is presented in partnership with:



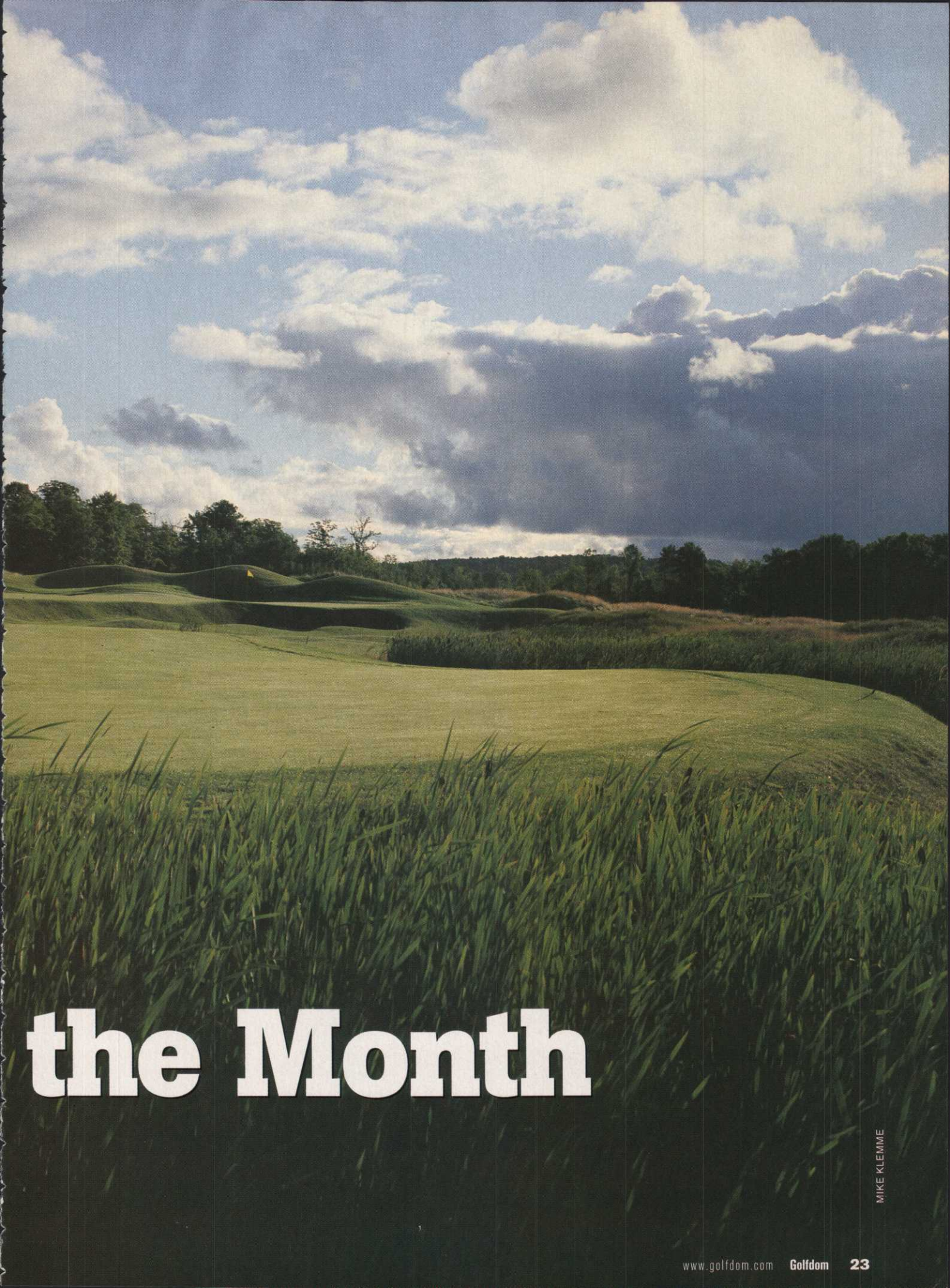
1721 Packard Avenue  
Racine, WI 53403-2564  
888-922-TURF  
[www.jacobsen.textron.com](http://www.jacobsen.textron.com)



# Hole of

■ Hole No. 11  
Grand Traverse Resort, Acme, Mich.





# the Month

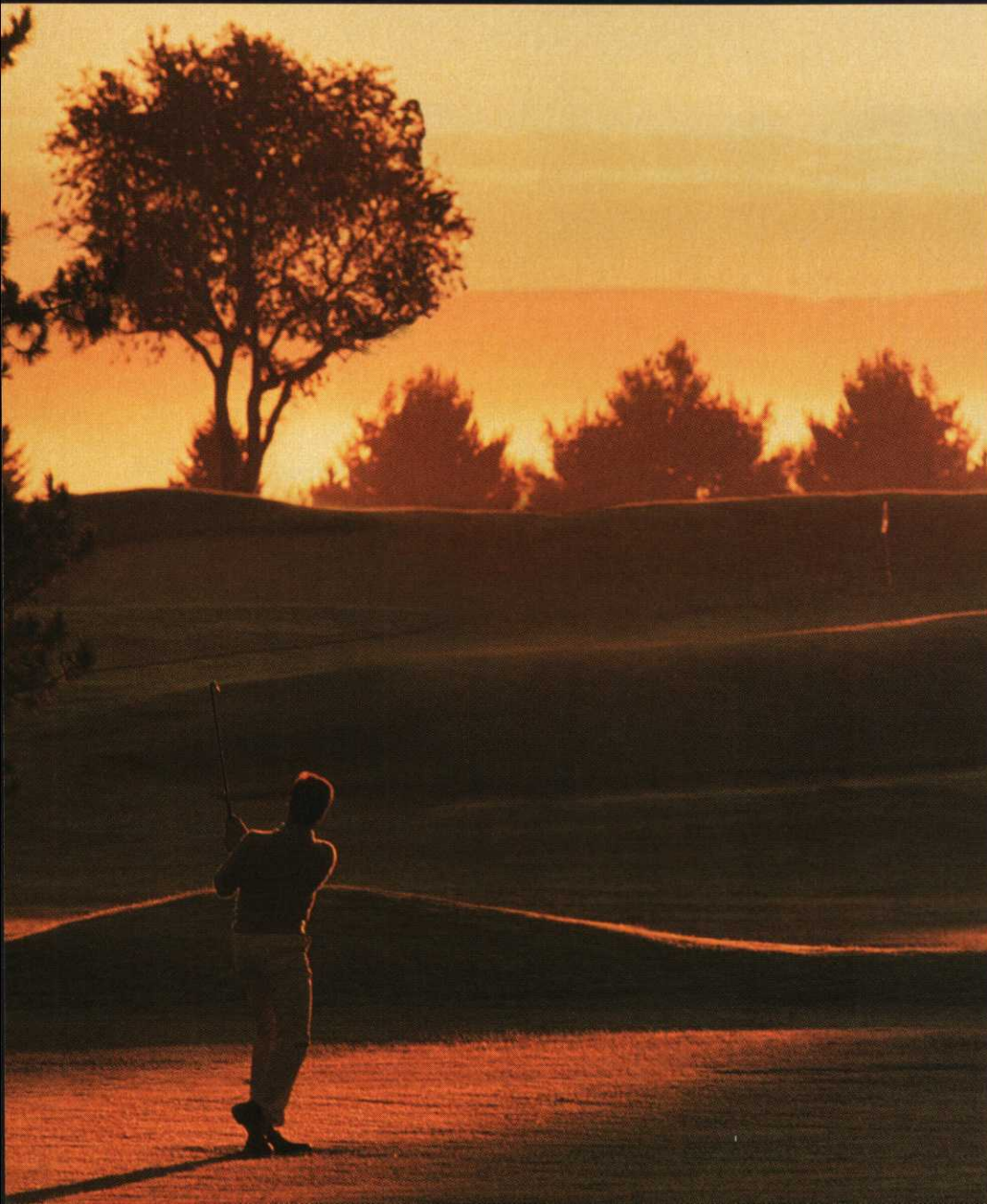
MIKE KLEMM



It delivers  
**EVERYTHING**

today's superintendent  
really needs.

Including a GREAT PRICE.



Ransomes delivers the high-quality, precision cut you expect – without all the nonessential features that can drive up costs. Every model is solidly built in ISO 9001-certified U.S. facilities, providing reliability you can count on for years to come. For more information, or the nearest dealer, call 1-888-922-TURF or visit [www.ttcsp.textron.com](http://www.ttcsp.textron.com).

Performance without the price.  
**RANSOMES**  
TEXTRON



**T**he heat must be getting to me. Just when I'm able to leave my house without bodyguards, just when I've let go of my personal security system, just when I can go out to dinner again without fear of attacks, I'm about to revisit the beloved "10 stupid things" theme.

This time, though, I'm not taking on superintendents or green committee chairmen. I've decided to hit a little closer to home. It's time our friends in the design business took some heat. So without further ado, here are the 10 stupid things golf course architects do that make us laugh out loud (now where did I put the phone number of that body-guard service?):

**1. You wear those red plaid jackets:** Hey, Donald Ross was a great architect and he's the ASGCA's main man. But how do you get those Ross family fabric coats through airport security?

**2. You strike a pose:** What are you and your followers pointing at in those lame "in-the-field" photographs? How about taking off the Rolex, dropping the borrowed blueprints, losing the stiff new logoed cap the developer gave you that morning and posing like normal people?

**3. You channel dead architects:** How do you know precisely what A.W. Tillinghast would have done were he still alive? You always assert something like that as you "restore" his work by installing a \$2 million water motif augmented by petunias planted in a symbolic shape. Hear that? It's the sound of Tillie spinning in his grave.

**4. You never admit your mistakes:** Why do you complain about governmental agencies when your last project eliminated all existing features and moved 2 million cubic yards of earth just to create Ballybunion-like conditions?

**5. You design fairways tighter than drums:** If fun golf is having every ball bounce off massive boards and funneling everything back to the fairway middle, why have tee shots? Design wider fairways, with more subtle contouring that rewards well-placed drives and can actually be mowed with something other than a Flymo.

**6. You claim full credit for a successful restoration when the superintendent and his crew found some old**

## Let's Get Stupid: Mad About Plaid

BY GEOFF SHACKELFORD



THE HEAT MUST BE  
GETTING TO ME. I'M  
ABOUT TO REVISIT  
THE BELOVED "10  
STUPID THINGS"  
THEME

**photos and did the work:** Isn't there enough credit to go around? I can see the mail already: This has never happened before, right? Right — and I'm Mother Theresa.

**7. You compromise short holes to reach the magical 7,000-yard plateau:** Have you ever considered explaining to the client that forcing 7,000 yards on the property eliminates things like fun short holes and design variety for the customers? I know the client demanded seven big ones, and the latest Callaway driver forces you to build it long, but it's worth a try.

**8. You call me to ask which player-architect might be a good match:** Why do you cater to the whole player-architect craze? It's usually a waste of money and everyone in the golf business knows players add little in the field. Recommend your client meet with Scott Hoch — and the developer will never ask for a player-architect again.

**9. You're the invisible man/woman:** Couldn't you sneak in a few more site visits when the crew is trying to get your blueprints translated into a course? I know you are all busy jet-setters, but for those big six- and seven-figure fees, you might want to make the extra effort. Also, should you decide to visit, do not argue about the site conditions with the superintendent that you failed to support during construction and who is actually on-site every day.

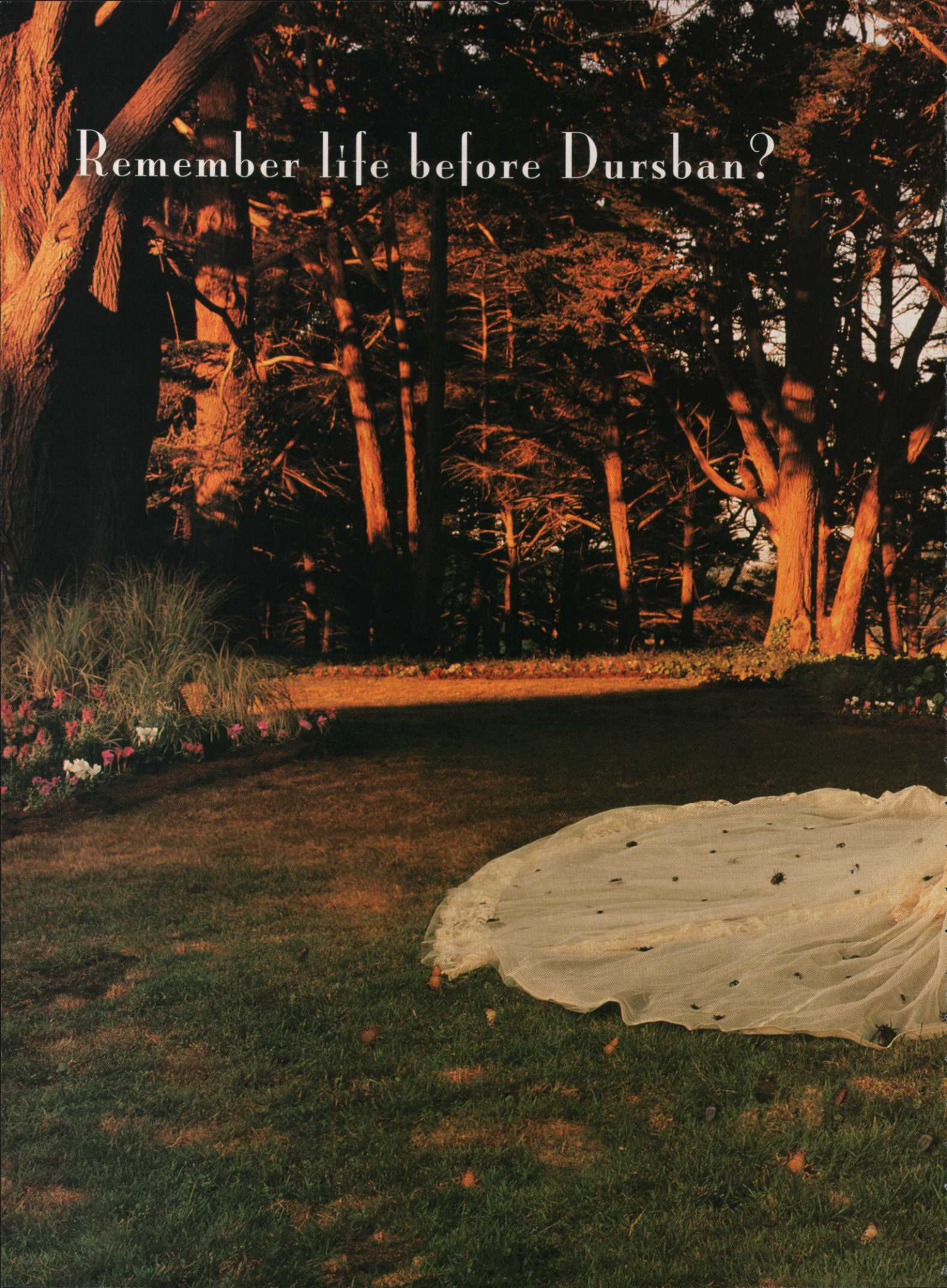
**10. You tell plaid jacket jokes:** As if it's not bad enough that you wear the Ross tartan as a jacket, do each of you have to crack a joke about it every time we see you in one? On second thought, perhaps that's a good thing. At least you can make fun of yourselves. Keep that in mind next time we run into each other.

---

*Geoff Shackelford is enjoying the company of his new Rottweilers, Colt and Alison, so don't bother to come to his home. You can e-mail him, however, at [geoffshackelford@aol.com](mailto:geoffshackelford@aol.com).*



Remember life before Dursban?







Before Dursban<sup>®</sup> insecticide, insect pests were, shall we say, a little out of control. Then Dursban came along and helped you get them under control. Low odor Dursban Pro has the power to protect turf and ornamentals from more than 280 insect species, all while providing long residual control. Simply put, when you apply Dursban Pro, insect pests are history.

 Dow AgroSciences

**Dursban<sup>®</sup> Pro**  
Specialty Insecticide







# The lure of e-commerce

Will online buying change the way the industry does business?

BY LARRY AYLWARD, MANAGING EDITOR

**H**e surfs the Web for weather forecasts, stock prices and sports scores. But New Jersey superintendent Trent Inman has never purchased anything online — not even a book from Amazon.com.

But the open-minded Inman, superintendent of Royce Brook GC in Somerville, N.J., admits that his buying habits could change with the influx of dot-com companies dedicated to selling golf course maintenance equipment online. The 26-year-old Inman — he of the Internet generation — is intrigued about the prospect of purchasing chemicals and equipment on the Internet.

“It would make the whole buying process a lot more refined,” Inman insists. “It would streamline your operation.”

Give Inman a cigar. He has grasped what business-to-business electronic commerce prophets in the industry have been passionately preaching to superintendents recently — that online buying from a single site featuring myriad products can make their jobs easier.

Inman is not alone. Other superintendents say they favor the one-stop-shop and call-your-own-shots style of doing business online so they

can quickly compare like products and purchase them without having to pick up the phone and talk to a salesperson.

Peter Salinetti, CGCS and general manager for Schuyler Meadows Club in Loudonville, N.Y., predicts that 75 percent of superintendents will be buying online in five years. “I’m looking forward to the day when (buying supplies online) is as much a part of my routine as anything else,” he says.

If you read the business news, you know that e-commerce is much more than a passing fancy. Forrester Research, a Cambridge, Mass.-based company that analyzes technology change and its impact on business, reports that e-commerce sales will grow to \$2.7 trillion in 2004 from \$43 billion in 1998.

This is not to say that e-commerce is governing the way the golf course maintenance industry does business. In fact, it hasn’t made a significant impact. But it is to say that several e-commerce players are building their Web sites especially for superintendents. These players are furnishing their sites with services that superintendents can use and enjoy — such as chat rooms, free e-mail and technical information — to entice them to visit.

But the question remains: Now that these





e-commerce players are offering superintendents elaborate Web sites, will superintendents visit the sites and participate in e-commerce?

Because if they don't visit and don't purchase anything, these e-commerce companies won't make any money — and it's a good bet they'll soon be lost in cyberspace.

### The players

If you attended the GCSAA show in New Orleans in February, you were bombarded with promotion from Golfsat, a new San Diego-based dot-com company that offers a Web site for superintendents ([www.golfsat.com](http://www.golfsat.com)) featuring e-commerce and other online services. Salinetti, a member of the site's advisory board, believes it will be a hit. "There are few things I've been involved with over the years that have excited me more about the industry than this has," Salinetti says.

But Golfsat has competition. Several new ventures, most of them recent, have been launched or will soon be launched to woo superintendents to buy equipment online, including [www.greentrac.com](http://www.greentrac.com), [www.e-greenbiz.com](http://www.e-greenbiz.com), [www.pgcgolf.com](http://www.pgcgolf.com), [www.xsag.com](http://www.xsag.com), [www.golfsolutions.com](http://www.golfsolutions.com), [www.epurchase.net](http://www.epurchase.net), [www.vwr-inc.com](http://www.vwr-inc.com) and [www.golfbusiness.com](http://www.golfbusiness.com). GCSAA, which is currently selling books, videos and other items online, may also renovate its site to sell turf supplies and equipment.

There are also vendors, from seed companies to soil probe suppliers, who could join the e-commerce fray to sell products on their own Web sites. And you can bet there's probably a few other industry-targeted dot-com companies and equipment vendors waiting in the wings to see how things shake out before they get involved.

What a difference a year makes. In April 1999, Austin, Texas-based GolfSolutions launched its site and appeared to be the industry's top e-commerce player. But the company and its site have struggled and its e-commerce segment is not functioning. The site, developed by John

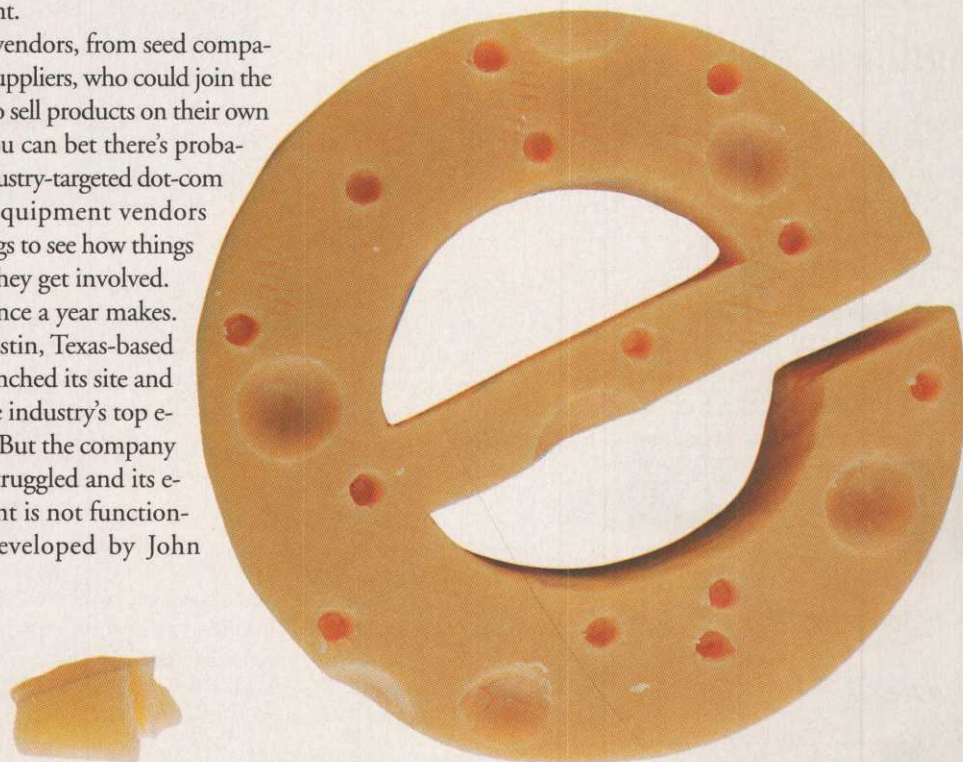
Mueller, has had trouble attracting suppliers. If you don't have suppliers, you can't sell equipment and make money on the sales.

"We were probably a little too soon," says Mueller, who recently took another job and now spends only about 30 percent of his time with GolfSolutions. "It has been more frustrating than I thought. Suppliers say they're not going to come to the site unless there are users, and users say they aren't going to come to the site unless there's added value."

The dot-com players will tell you that building traffic is crucial to creating a successful e-commerce site. Once there's traffic, the dot-com players can tell vendors the site has an audience for their products. Then they can build relationships with the vendors, sell their products and make a percentage on the sales.

Golfsat is trying to build its audience by offering superintendents an array of free cyber goods, including chat rooms, technical information and DTN satellite weather forecasts. When the company learned that many superintendents don't have on-the-job access to computers or the Internet, it developed a low-cost computer program for them. For \$29.95 a month, users can sign up for Golfsat's hardware package, which includes a personal computer, software and Internet access.

*Continued on page 33*





These Web sites currently offer or plan to offer e-commerce to the golf course maintenance industry:

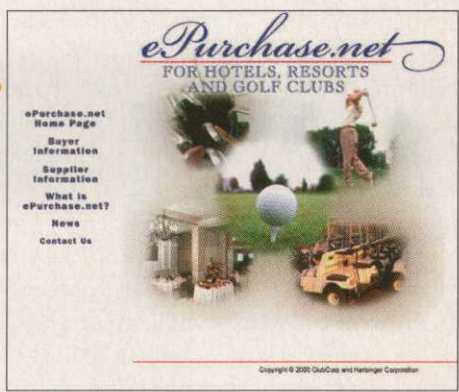


**e-greenbiz.com** — The site offers industry news, an online auction, and a hard-goods catalog “to create an electronic option for green industry professionals.”

**epurchase.net** — This site plans to provide a point of access for buyers and suppliers to exchange products and services, such as golf course maintenance equipment, food-and-beverage services, and broader hospitality industry products. The site is a joint venture between ClubCorp and Harbinger, a supplier of business-to-business e-commerce software, services and solutions.



**golfsat.com** — Developed specifically for superintendents, the site's mission is to “enhance the professionalism of superintendents by advancing their ability to manage their courses with greater effectiveness and efficiencies, through Internet technologies, enhanced communications and server-based software solutions.” Its e-commerce segment should be functioning by fall.



**golfsolutions.com** — This site's mission is to help superintendents and suppliers perform their daily activities more efficiently and effectively. However, the site, which debuted in April 1999, has struggled to attract e-commerce vendors.



**greentrac.com** — This site features an electronic request for proposal (eRFP) service for specific goods and/or services for purchase within a specific time frame. The eRFP links buyers with vendors, who then respond with multiple competitive bids according to a submitted proposal. The site also features an eAuction function, which offers surplus, used or refurbished equipment and green industry products for sale to the highest bidder.



**igreens.com** — The site is for the business-to-business needs of superintendents, pros, club managers, golf shop operators, food-and-beverage managers, developers and construction companies, equipment manufacturers and service providers. They can submit a request for product or request for quote (RFQ) directly to vendors and service providers.