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# Golfdom

JUNE 2001 • VOLUME 56 • NUMBER 6

## Labor of Love

### 34 **History Repeats Itself**

Though the USGA doesn't rule out using newer courses for its Majors, history and heritage give certain courses, like Shinnecock Hills (below), an advantage.

By Mark Leslie

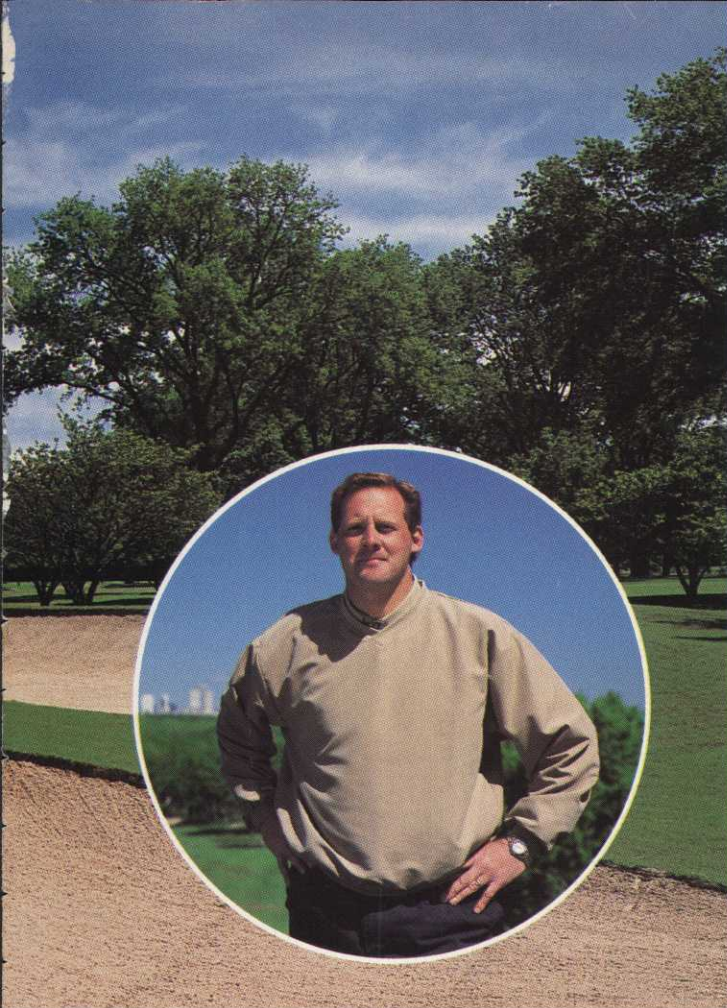


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Superintendents can focus on cost-conscious ways to keep employees safe. Part One of *Golfdom's* Living Well series.

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## cover story

BY LARRY AYLWARD

John Szklinski is at Southern Hills CC because he worked his tail off to get there. But it hasn't been easy preparing for the U.S. Open.

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### About the cover

Tulsa, Okla., photographer Bill Welch spent a beautiful April morning following John Szklinski around Southern Hills CC while he busily prepared for the U.S. Open. Needless to say, Welch got a workout.

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## Reap-What-You-Sow Philosophy

New Jersey golf course owner finds that charity and golf make perfect sense.

By Larry Aylward

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## Been there, seen that

*Golfdom* welcomes Mike Heacock, former vice president of agronomy and maintenance for American Golf Corp., to its editorial mix. Heacock wants to field your questions in his new column, "Been There, Seen That." In his debut column, Heacock writes about what it's *really* like to work for a management company.

### News with a hook

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- 16 Shopping for Hand-held Power Equipment

**Who was that guy?**— The statue of the guy with the beard behind the statue of Babe Zaharias on page 16 of the April issue ("Play 18, Peruse the Art") is Old Tom Morris, not Bobby Jones, as we reported. Sorry Old Tom.

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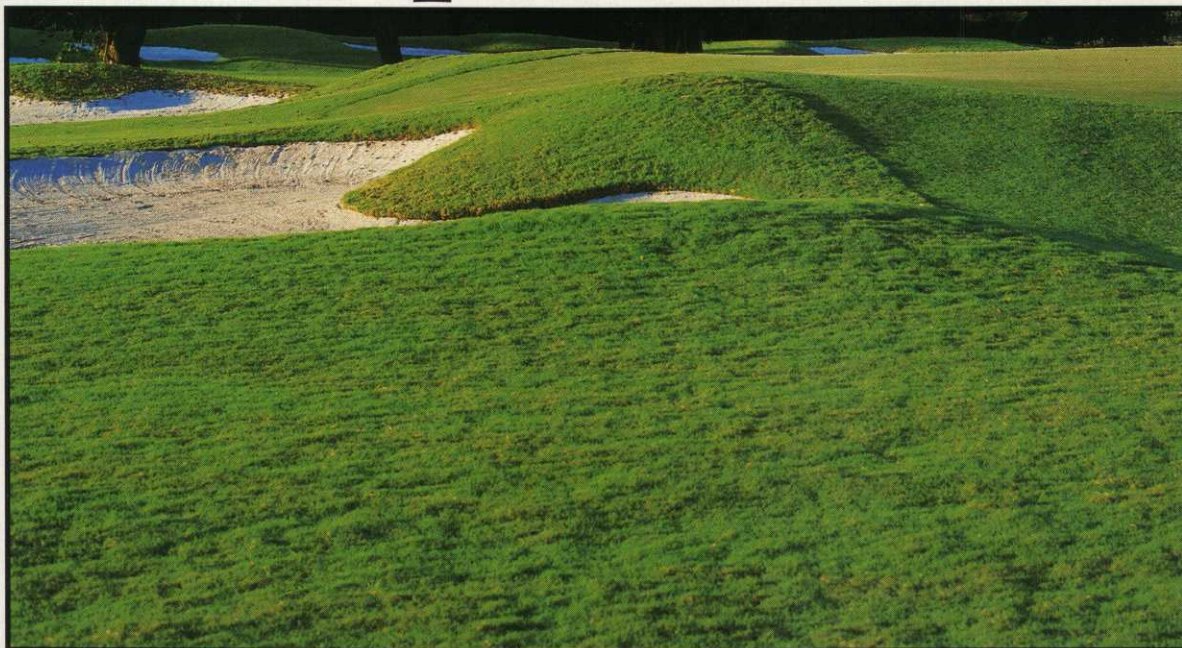


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SEMINARS & CONFERENCES

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**11 Iowa GCSA's State Meeting**  
Ames, Iowa  
Contact 319-286-5596

**12 Cactus and Pines GCSA:  
Managing Turf Environment**  
Dewey, Ariz.  
Contact 480-609-6778

**14-18 NGCOA's Take Your Daughter  
to the Course Week**  
Contact 512-258-3809 for more  
information about having your  
course participate

**19 Mississippi Valley GCSA's  
Monthly Meeting**  
Valley Park, Mo.  
Contact 618-259-3207

**19 Georgia GCSA: Innovative  
Superintendents' Series**  
Ball Ground, Ga.  
Contact 706-742-2651

**20 University of Massachusetts  
Field Day**  
South Deerfield, Mass.  
Contact 508-892-0382

**21 Cactus and Pines GCSA  
Western District Meeting**  
Phoenix  
Contact 480-609-6778

## JULY

**19-21 Turfgrass Producers  
International Conference and Expo**  
Toronto  
Contact 800-405-8873

**27 Cactus and Pines GCSA  
Affiliate Members Meeting**  
Phoenix  
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## AUGUST

**2 Iowa State University Field Day**  
Ames, Iowa  
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**5-7 Georgia GCSA  
Summer Conference**  
Callaway Gardens, Ga.  
Contact 706-742-2651

**16 Michigan Golf Course Owners  
Association's Eighth Annual**

**Golf Outing and Field Day**  
Augusta, Mich.  
Contact 517-482-4312

**21 Cornell University Field Day**  
Ithaca, N.Y.  
Contact 607-255-1792

**28 GCSAA Seminar:  
Managing On-the-Job Behavior**  
Tucson, Ariz.  
Contact 480-609-6778

## SEPTEMBER

**10 Iowa Turfgrass Institute**  
Burlington, Iowa  
Contact 319-286-5596

**10 Mississippi Valley GCSA  
Monthly Meeting**  
St. Louis  
Contact 618-259-3207

**13 Intermountain GCSA's  
Annual Meeting**  
Ogden, Utah  
Contact 435-259-6674

**23-24 Carolinas GCSA's  
Annual Golf Outing and Education**  
Jefferson, N.C.  
Contact 800-476-4272

## OCTOBER

**8 Iowa GCSA State Meeting**  
Panora, Iowa  
Contact 319-286-5596

**10 Joint Meeting: GCSA of  
New England and Golf Course  
Managers of Cape Cod**  
Pocasset, Mass.  
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**15 Rocky Mountain GCSA's  
Annual Meeting**  
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**18 Western Washington GCSA's  
Annual Meeting**  
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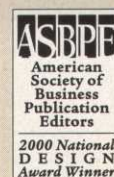
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# Going Postal

■ WE'VE GOT MAIL

## Reality TV

I'm shocked and disappointed in your April cover story ("Made for TV"). Has *Golfdom* already succumbed to sugar-coated, soft-pop journalism? This article's twisted view of hosting a televised event has me wondering what you guys are doing.

As superintendent at Kemper Lakes GC, I have hosted four SBC Senior Opens, the only Senior Tour event on network TV. I am clueless

about the situations described in your article. Talking to TV crews? Relationships with TV personnel? What are you talking about? I'm lucky to get a few moments with the production manager.

The real deal is more like this: a group of cowboys arrives at the beginning of the week and starts to set up their gear. I try to ask them to stay away from any problem areas, and I give them my cell phone number, hoping they will call before doing something wrong, not after. I

constantly keep an eye on all activity and pray that it is dry, because trying to balance the needs of all kinds of people — those erecting scoreboards, making food, constructing scaffolding and skyboxes (but rarely any TV personalities) is a lot easier if it doesn't rain.

Why don't you try talking to some of us who have hosted annual events that don't get the spotlight of a Major or don't have superintendents who have had more than 30 years to establish some media contacts?

**Gregg Rosenthal**  
Certified Superintendent  
Kemper Lakes GC  
Long Grove, Ill.

## D as in ...

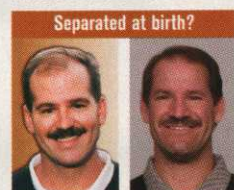
After reading the article on the GCSAA show in "Big D" by Pat Jones ("Beer and Scribbles from Big D," April), several words come to mind: dull, dreary, dingy, dreadful — just to name a few. In fact, a friend of mine called the airline to change his ticket, at a fee, just to leave a day early.

My suggestion, and many other superintendents' suggestion as well, would be to have the show in some new locations in the North. We're inside 90 percent of the time anyway. Why not Seattle, Minneapolis, Chicago or New York?

**Peter W. Nolan**  
Superintendent  
Hunter's Ridge GC  
Marion, Iowa

I beg to differ with you on your perspective of Dallas. I lived in North Texas from 1992 to 2000, and I loved it there.

I realized the weather sucked the whole week of the conference, but that is to be expected anywhere in the United States in February. I didn't



Pat Jones

Bill Cowher

take any of the shuttles, but is that Dallas' fault or the hotels? Does your dislike for the city stem from the fact that maybe you don't like the Dallas Cowboys? Your picture in the magazine does show you that you have a vague resemblance to Pittsburgh Steelers head coach Bill Cowher.

**Danny Arena**  
Superintendent  
Henry Homberg Municipal GC  
Beaumont, Texas

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MIKE FABUS

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Tough  
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Competitive ball washers? Listen up, you lightweights. The new Century Ball Washer from Standard Golf is going to make you look like the broken-down, splash-monkeys you all are.



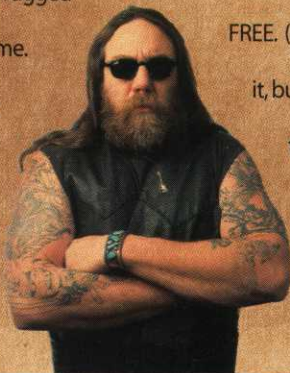
Wannabe.

**Thick Skinned**

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Can it clean? The Century

"Tiny" here will be happy to tattoo your logo on any order of nine or more Century Ball Washers. Or we'll just laser engrave them.



has exactly one wash cycle, and it ain't gentle. The crank action plows up to four balls at once through a forest of tough nylon bristles, scrubbing

all those hard-to-reach places without once splashing you. The built-in overflow makes sure the outside is never soapy and sludgy (because that's totally uncool). We even added a convenient slot for our new effervescent Sparkleen™ Soap Tablet.

**Engraved or Tattooed Logo?**

Purchase nine Century Ball Washers, and we'll put your logo on all of 'em, FREE. (Normally we laser engrave it, but for a ball washer this tough, we're considering tattoos.) Finally, the

Century comes in five cool colors, and is available in several console options as well. If you're looking for a new ball washer,



Sure, his bristles are the only ones tougher than ours, but can he wash four balls at once?

don't settle for some lightweight splash-monkey. Get the new Century Ball Washer from Standard Golf. But unless you want to start something, don't STARE. Just ask for Standard Golf.

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**ASK FOR STANDARD GOLF**

**F**or the past three years, GCSAA officials have studied the idea of launching an e-commerce initiative in about the same fashion that a hungry Sylvester the Cat studies Tweety Bird up in his cage. They wanted it so badly they could taste it, but they couldn't quite figure out how to do it. Sufferin' succotash!

In April, GCSAA finally struck a deal with XS Turf, a new division of XS Ag, which is the acknowledged leader in online sales for farmers. The idea is to charge a 3-percent transaction fee on sales of chemical and fertilizer products traded over the GCSAA/XS platform — cleverly named the Golf SuperMarket. GCSAA and XS then divvy up the transaction fees in undisclosed shares.

But then, GCSAA and XS promptly delayed the “pilot” launch of the big, new GCSAA cyber-mall because they supposedly don't have sales tax issues and other details worked out. Ironically, those problems were “discovered” a couple of days after the key industry suppliers lambasted the whole idea during a meeting in Lawrence, Kan.

Why would those companies — the people who pay for the 85 percent of GCSAA's operations that aren't funded by dues — object to this concept? Let me count the ways:

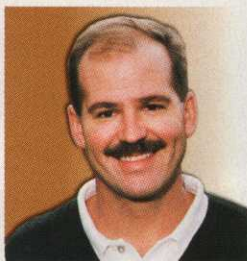
1. Times are already tough for many local distributors, and GCSAA's online sales effort threatens to further “disintermediate” them. “Disintermediate” is a fancy way of saying, “Cut out the middleman.” Remember that local dealers and reps aren't just the sales and service backbone of the industry — they also fund more than half the cost of chapter programs and services.

2. The association is also essentially competing with its own clients, particularly companies like Golfsat that invested heavily in association trade show space, magazine ads, etc.

3. Superintendents aren't exactly beating down the doors to buy things online. In *Golfdom's* independent study last year, only 3 percent of computer-using superintendents said they'd actually bought anything business-related on the 'Net, while more than 40 percent said there was no way they would buy anything online soon.

## The e-Association: Sufferin' Succotash

BY PAT JONES



GCSAA IS LOOKING  
FOR NEW BUCKS,  
AND (VOILA!)  
TRANSACTION FEES  
FROM E-COMMERCE  
SEEM TO OFFER  
NEW REVENUE

4. What, if anything, is member-driven about this idea? I'd be astounded if the words, “Gee, I wish I could buy a case of fungicide online through my professional association” ever once popped out of anyone's mouth. Isn't the role of the association to serve the needs of the members rather than to define — and then profit by — them?

That's what I'm hearing from the manufacturers, distributors and even some superintendents about this idea. Now, here's my take:

The association's intentions are honorable but misguided. But GCSAA has to pay for programs, initiatives and 120-plus staff members, and it's concerned about the possibility of trade show and magazine advertising revenues shrinking. They're looking for new bucks, and (Voila!) transaction fees from e-commerce seem to offer new revenue.

So, with this pilot venture, GCSAA is dipping its toes in the water to see if e-commerce might be the next big association money machine. The question is whether the association is willing to play a financial game of chicken with irritated suppliers, distributors and other “partners.” Personally, I doubt GCSAA will take that risk for 3 percent of an unknown but extremely dubious online market.

Don't get me wrong: GCSAA should be active in e-business. It should have a first-class Web site that allows members to pay registration fees, buy books and training materials, take online seminars and download useful tools. But when its e-business threatens to put your local supplier out of business, something isn't right.

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