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By Peter Blais



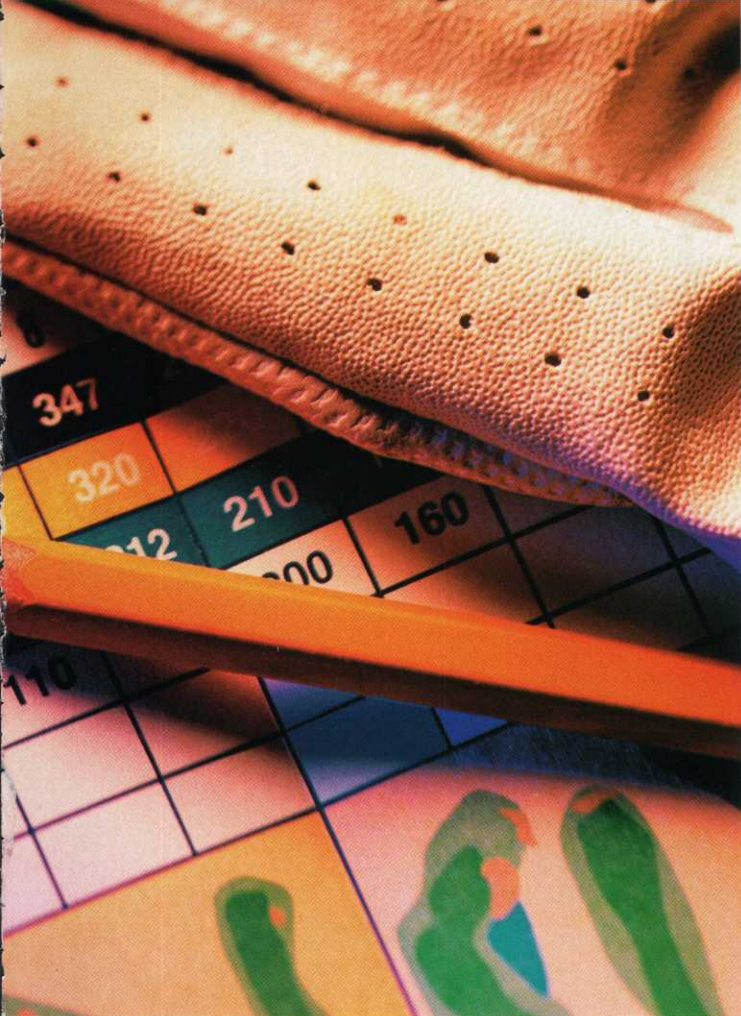
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BY LARRY AYLWARD AND
FRANK H. ANDORKA JR.

The annual *Golfdom* Report offers a detailed analysis on the state of the industry, including an in-depth economic overview and a special report on the health of the job market.

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Corporate Creative Director Lisa Lehman and Cleveland photographer Mark Galbreath collaborated to create our "Keeping Score" cover.

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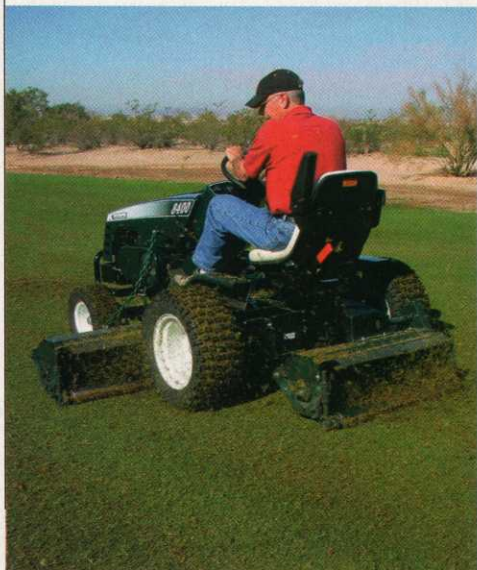
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Getting It Straight

The "Go Native" story in the November issue should have reported that Audubon International is a not-for-profit organization, not a for-profit organization. Also, a paragraph in the August "Shades of Green" column insinuated that the PGA Tour was associated with the PGA Merchandise Show. It is not.

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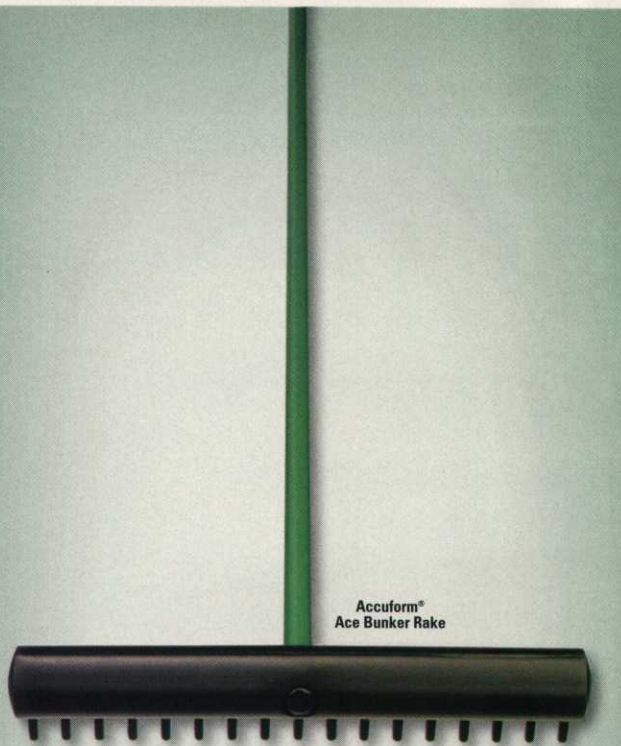
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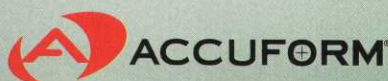
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The great Satchel Paige used to say, "Don't look back. Something might be gaining on you." Nonetheless, I suppose I can't entirely avoid looking back for our year-end issue, so

let's just sum up the 2003 timeline this way:

Nasty spring. Lame economy. Rounds down. Budget pressure. Decent autumn. Recovery coming? Happy Holidays!

Thankfully, 2003 is just about history. Now let's shine up the old crystal ball and see what lies ahead in 2004. Here are my predictions for the year to come:

Poor Richard I ain't, but ...

Folks, we're due for a decent weather year. Nothing scientific, but it's time Mother Nature gives the business a break. The swami predicts a mild winter and a string of warm dry weekends next spring. (Hey, it could happen.)

The planets are aligning ...

... and so are industry suppliers. The Pursell Farms effort (including Toro, Syngenta, etc.) and the John Deere OneSource initiative are the most prominent examples of seemingly diverse industry companies collaborating. But look for more strategic partnerships next year. Why? The overall market is perceived as weak, and companies are trying innovative ways to grow their share of the same pie. If they can offer one-stop services or package their value with another partner, it can help them gain more of your business.

Growing trends

According to a *Golfdom* study earlier this year, the use of PGRs surged 34 percent from 2001 to 2003. There's no reason to think that trend won't continue. Growth regulators are becoming the Silly Putty management tool: Superintendents find something new and different to do with them every day. Tank mixing for *Poa* management is catching fire and will surely grow more as university and field trial data continue to come in.

Consolidation consensus

My friends in the chemical business say one final round of consolidation is imminent and

Time to Shine Up the Crystal Ball

BY PAT JONES



FOLKS, WE'RE DUE FOR A DECENT WEATHER YEAR. IT'S TIME MOTHER NATURE GIVES THE BUSINESS A BREAK

will likely involve three or four of the industry's smaller manufacturers being rolled up into one big player. DuPont's decision to re-activate in the turf market by purchasing the rest of post-patent marketer Griffin LLC may be the trigger that spurs this last big rollup of companies.

But that's not the only consolidation talk I'm hearing. Suppliers are increasingly balking at the seemingly endless number of requests for funding from associations, foundations, coalitions and other interest groups whose missions overlap. One major industry executive recently told me, "We're going to 'encourage' these folks to merge their efforts by allocating our funds a lot more selectively. We're tired of the redundancy."

Aesthetic doesn't necessarily mean pretty

The worst trend we'll see next year will be attempts by communities — particularly liberal far Northern cities and counties — to ban "aesthetic" uses of pesticides. The model for these efforts comes from Canada where, because they lack a federal pre-emption law, antipesticide activists have aggressively gone after lawn care applicators and, in some cases, golf courses for using turf chemicals.

Even though the United States has a federal "pre-emption" law that seemingly prohibits communities from overriding national or state laws, the "aesthetic use" language is already creeping in to proposals that limit phosphorous in fertilizers or prevent public spending on pesticides for parks and municipal courses.

In short, after several quiet years on the environmental regulation front, look for local battles aplenty next year.

Publisher Pat Jones can be reached at 440-891-3126 or pjones@advanstar.com

We've Got Mail

■ LETTERS FROM THE FIELD

Can't We All Get Along?

To stir up stereotypical issues between golf professionals and superintendents is not healthy and can be judged as poor journalism (Flagstick, October).

It's true that the chasm is wide between the two. My problem is that unprofessional people on both sides widened the divide.

If both people are doing their respective jobs, they are putting in megahours every week and do not need their positions encroached upon. Superintendents are the people behind the scenes who let course conditions speak for them. The professionals are the people organizing course traffic and handing out member-guest prizes at the end of the day.

But the superintendent does leave during the middle of the

afternoon when some courses are just starting to get going with member or public traffic. Therefore, the person standing behind the counter is the contact for all problems that develop.

The members or public golfers vent after their rounds, and the superintendent's office is not necessarily part of the basic traffic flow of the facility. The "sounding board" is typically the golf shop.

I know and respect both positions, but I need to comment that people-induced stress is more taxing than equipment- or turf-induced stress. You can attack your equipment or turf issues immediately without any personal or emotional situations. But people can be vindictive, and sometimes people issues are not repairable.

Kris Smith
Owner (and Former Golf Professional)

Ironman Golf Course
Detroit Lakes, Minn.

Suped-Up Equipment Harms Game

I just finished reading the article in the October issue of *Golfdom* about the need for a classic ball ("The Case for the Classic Ball"), and I would like to say that I couldn't agree more. The so-called advances in equipment have not helped the golf industry at all.

I'm a PGA golf professional at a daily-fee course in southern New Mexico, and I keep our rounds-played records religiously. Our course started a steady decline in the mid to late 1990s in the number of rounds played. That coincides with the advent of the titanium drivers, which everyone thought were the greatest. Twenty years from now, when people look back at the business

during this time, they will find that decline in participation and the advent of titanium drivers happened at the same time. Ely Callaway will be remembered for pushing the envelope for how much golfers would spend for equipment and for pushing a lot of people out of golf.

The only thing that has been accomplished is that the game has been made much more expensive, and a lot of people have decided to spend their money elsewhere.

Mike Olson, PGA Professional
Dos Lagos Golf Course
Anthony, N.M.

You can e-mail letters to Frank Andorka at andorka@advanstar.com, fax to 440-891-2675 or send them via snail-mail to: 7500 Old Oak Blvd., Cleveland, OH 44130.



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What in the world is going on out there? What impels people to do certain things — zany, bizarre and dumb things? Since January,

I've kept a file folder in my desk called "Wild and Wacky News for 2003." I've collected some doozies. Check 'em out.

A desperate man

Word was Tighue Shields, a former greenskeeper at Weston Hills Country Club in Florida, could keep a mean green. But he couldn't keep track of his own green, as in his finances.

So Shields donned his fly-fishing cap (his *fly-fishing* cap?) and knocked off a few banks last June. Police busted him shortly after he finished his third heist. While Shields worked in Florida, he robbed the banks in Arizona. Apparently, he flew from Florida to Phoenix on Mondays when the course was slow to do his dirty work.

The robberies sound like they were more the work of a desperate man than a seasoned criminal. Creditors were chasing Shields at the time of the robberies. Shields also tried to rob the same bank twice, which cops said was foolish.

A dumb thing to say

The greens at Weston Hills were in bad shape until Shields arrived at the course last March. Shields had the greens looking fine in a matter of months, and golfers hailed him as some kind of turf swami.

But at least one golfer was *way* too caught up in the emotions that came with the enhanced conditioning of the course. He had the audacity to tell a reporter from the *Miami Herald*, "For a good putting surface, we're willing to overlook a few bank jobs."

And you wonder why so many nongolfers view golfers as snobs.

Who does he think he is?

Ted McAnlis, a golf course architect from Florida, was sentenced to 10 years in the slammer after being convicted on eight counts of tax evasion. McAnlis evaded more than \$1.3 million in federal taxes, penalties and interest by concealing his income and assets from the IRS. He hadn't filed a tax return since 1977 because he

Wild and Wacky News from 2003

BY LARRY AYLWARD



TIGHUE SHIELDS
COULD KEEP A
MEAN GREEN. BUT
HE COULDN'T KEEP
TRACK OF HIS OWN
GREEN, AS IN
HIS FINANCES

believed he was a "sovereign citizen" who didn't have to pay taxes. Did McAnlis really think he could get away with this?

Imaginary superintendent

Superintendents who abhor the way their profession was portrayed in *Caddyshack* will get a good guffaw out of this one. Gregory Jones was fired from his job as sports editor at the *Roswell (N.M.) Daily Record* after making up quotes in a story, which were actually script lines from *Caddyshack*, and attributing them to a made-up superintendent named Carl Spangler. (Yes, Jones, a so-called *Caddyshack* fan, botched the last name of Bill Murray's character, which was Spackler.)

Jones said he thought everyone was a *Caddyshack* fan and would appreciate his humor. Memo to Jones: Let *Caddyshack* — or any funny flick, for that matter — do the entertaining.

You've got to be kidding

After missing a crucial putt during a qualifying competition for the New Zealand Open, a golfer moaned and groaned that duck droppings caused him to miff the putt.

David Hartshorne said the duck droppings were in the line of his putt. He requested relief but was refused. After he missed the putt and fell out of contention for the tournament, Hartshorne ripped the New Zealand PGA for its ruling. He whined that he should have been able to brush the droppings aside. But the referee ruled — and this has to be a first — that the droppings had stuck to the green, were baked by the sun and could not have impeded his putt.

Not lost in the tiff was the fact that Hartshorne had the nerve to complain — even though the putt he missed was from 35 feet.

Can you say, "Sore loser?"

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