

Full of Firsts

GRANT, REHR AND GIORDANO MAKE HISTORY AT ST. ANDREWS

By Anthony Pioppi, Contributing Editor

It was the 134th playing of the Open Championship and the 27th time that the Old Course in St. Andrews, Scotland, was hosting it. But this year's event in July, at least on the maintenance side, was also full of firsts.

Old Course Head Greenskeeper Euan Grant was on the job for his first Open and is believed to be the first non-St. Andrewsian to hold the title.

Lauren Giordano, who in 2003 interned at the Old Course and became the first woman ever to work on the crew there, was back, becoming the first woman ever to volunteer for an Open Championship. She has since earned a degree from Rutgers University.



Jay Rehr

And maybe most impressive was Jay Rehr, who undoubtedly became the first golf course turf technician to chalk up a career Grand Slam. Rehr spent 16 years turning wrenches at Augusta National, worked at the 1997 and 2002 U.S. Opens as well as the 2003 PGA before completing the slam at the most hallowed golf course in the world. He also has two U.S. Senior Opens, a U.S. Women's Open and a pair of Memorial Tournaments in his toolbox.

"Who wouldn't want to do a British Open?" the jocular Rehr asked rhetorically. Since 2004 he has been on his own as the sole employee of Turf Equipment Consulting based in Grovertown, Ga., but it was his old boss at Augusta, Marsh Benson, that advised Rehr to complete the Slam at the Old Course.

"He told me, 'If you're going to do it, do it right,'" Rehr says. What impressed Rehr most about the entire Old Course maintenance operation and what set it apart from all other major tournaments he's worked was the laid-back attitude. Starting with Grant on down to the guys who raked bunkers, tournament week was approached with a supreme air of confidence but without the manic pace and the world-could-end-at-any-moment attitude found in the maintenance facilities at many U.S. Majors.

Grant usually had a song on his lips when he made his first appearance at about 4 a.m. each day even though he was often working on less than three hours sleep. His boundless enthusiasm was at once amazing and frustrating to those in his presence. Grant's demeanor established the tone for the entire tournament. "You're not under pressure. You're not under the gun. It's not like everything has to be done immediately," Rehr said.

Instead of 18-hour days common for mechanics at U.S. Majors, the Old Course techs were broken down into two nine-hour shifts. Another difference in the work atmosphere that Rehr said was readily apparent was that the golf course and the tournament were the focal points, not the head greenskeeper. Grant had no desire to put his individual stamp on the event other than to have the Old Course in the best condition possible.

With course conditions the focus, the results were universally praised. Some players, including Greg Norman, said the Old Course was in the best condition they had ever seen.

Continued on page 22

Business briefs

Briefs continued from page 14

tration data development by the 2,4-D Task Force and review by EPA began in 1988.

Andersons restructures group

The Andersons has restructured its Processing Group and named Tom Waggoner president of the group. Waggoner had previously been vice president of sales and marketing for the group.

Arysta secures marketing rights

Arysta LifeScience North America announced it has secured exclusive domestic marketing rights for fluoxastrobin, a strobilurin fungicide in development for disease control alone and in combination products.

"We view this investment as a demonstration of our continuing commitment to supply highly effective plant disease control chemistry for turfgrass management and ornamental production," said Elin Miller, Arysta LifeScience North America president and CEO.

Fluoxastrobin is being tested extensively in university trials, according to the company.

Ex-ClubCorp head begins company

Former ClubCorp president Jim Hinckley has formed Century Golf Partners, a golf investment company created for the purpose of acquiring and managing country clubs and daily-fee golf courses throughout the country.

In addition, Century Golf Partners has created a golf investment partnership with Walton Street Capital, a private real estate investment company based in Chicago.

Hetrick leaves GCBAA

Lee Hetrick has left the Golf Course Builders Association of America (GCBAA) as its executive director after six years. Hetrick, based in Lincoln, Neb., announced his departure at the end of the association's summer meeting in New Jersey, adding that he wants to pursue other career goals. Hetrick will serve as a consultant to the GCBAA Executive Committee until the end of the year. Hetrick was instrumental in the growth and stability of the organization. GCBAA membership grew by 30 percent under his reign.

Off The Fringe

Continued from page 14

180 members are from the region.

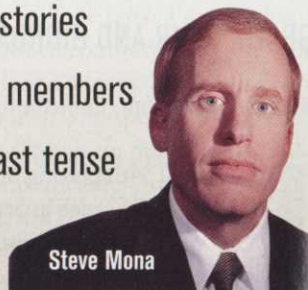
"We've heard reports that range from people who came through the fury of the storm OK to stories where golf courses that some of our members worked at — and I have to use the past tense — are basically unrecognizable now."

Mona said he hadn't heard of any members and their kin who had been killed. "We've heard of people who can't get back to their homes, so they're living in different places," he added.

Mike Tinkey, the NGCOA's deputy director, said golf course owners have stepped up to help their fellow owners whose courses were battered by the storm. Tinkey said many phone calls came from Florida owners who had endured the rash of hurricanes that ripped through that state last year. They empathized with what owners on the Gulf coast had gone through and wanted to help them, even though their courses hadn't recovered fully from the Florida hurri-

We've heard reports that range from people who came through the fury of the storm OK to stories where golf courses that some of our members worked at — and I have to use the past tense — are basically unrecognizable now."

Steve Mona



canes. "I thought that was very moving," Tinkey said.

It's not certain how many jobs in the golf industry will be lost because of the hurricane. Typically, insurance doesn't cover lost employee income, Tinkey said, so employees could be out of work if courses shut down for a long period.

Spence said he's worried that golf course workers won't be able to make a living. "That's the main concern we have is how these people are going to live," Spence says, noting that U.S. superintendents who want to help dis-

placed workers can contact him at 985-851-1376 or csecc@bellsouth.net.

This is the first time GCSAA has been forced to move its show so close to its date. Mona says it will take extra work, effort and money to do. "We're attempting something that's never been done, but we're very confident we can do it," he added.

The GCSAA and other golf organizations have established a relief program to assist the public and its members effected by the hurricane. For more information, contact the GCSAA at 800-472-7878.

Continued from page 21

The Old Course was being prepared for the Championship well before Grant came on board in 2004. But under his guidance the majority of the 112 bunkers were rebuilt in the last year, many of them restored to their former configurations.

The famed Road Hole Bunker was completely done over with the foreknowledge that the golfing world would be scrutinizing the efforts. The fact that no players complained about the alteration may be the highest praise.

Giordano, who's now on the crew at Bam Hollow Country Club in Tifton Falls, N.J., was ecstatic about her return to the Old Course. With her mother along to enjoy the experience, she was glad to be back to the epitome of minimal maintenance.

"I don't agree with what we do in America — lush, high input," she said. "You look at the conditions and ask, 'Is this necessary?'"

Giordano's goal is to become superintendent at a low-input layout. And for a week she was back mowing fairways and syringing greens on such a course, which is also her favorite course.

"It's dreamland," Giordano said, probably not the first time that has been said about the Old Course.

“Quotable

"Reality is reality, and Mother Nature wins all battles. Just like today, I wanted rain . . . but not an inch and a half."

— Paul Galligan, superintendent of Grand Traverse Resort in Traverse City, Mich., on dealing with the weather

"Never have so many poorly skilled people spent more money on an activity that makes them swear and hate themselves."

— Comedian and writer Jay Mohr on the great game of golf (*Sports Illustrated*)

The Barenbrug Advantage

If You Want Better Turf, Use Better Seed.

Helping our customers be more successful is the foundation of the Barenbrug Advantage. We offer winning combinations of world class turf seed that reflect years of advanced research and dedication to a professional industry.

Being great in grass – it's the Barenbrug Advantage.



Turf Saver[®] with RTF[®] Tall Fescue Blend

RTF is a modern turf miracle. Unlike any other tall fescue, RTF does not grow in clumps and has the ability to self-repair. So advanced, it is covered by a US patent*, so remember... if it has rhizomes, it must be RTF.



Panterra Overseeding Ryegrass

High quality overseeding annual ryegrass that is economical and allows for easy transition. Panterra displays excellent turf quality on golf courses, sports fields and can cut your overseeding costs dramatically.



Turf Star[®] Perennial Ryegrass Blend

A blend of top rated turf-type perennial ryegrass varieties. High density, quick establishing and dark green.



Turf Blue[™] Kentucky Bluegrass Blend

This Kentucky Bluegrass blend can withstand frequent mowing and intensive wear, and is widely used for sports fields, fairways, lawns and turf production.

*US Patent 6,677,507

800-547-4101
BARENBRUG USA

www.barusa.com • info@barusa.com

 **BARENBRUG**
Great in Grass[®]

Recently I was asked if a particular compound used on golf courses was a “must have” or “nice to have” product. It was a sobering question that deserves a thoughtful answer. I challenge you to consider your pesticide inventories. What are your must-have and nice-to-have products?

For instance, just ask managers of cool-season grasses if particular fungicides are a must have or nice to have. In the Sunbelt and areas with sandy soils, just ask if having an effective nematicide is a must have or nice to have. The same goes for pre-plant soil fumigation to control all pest populations.

Actually the question is too broad to have just a simple answer. It would be convenient if all environmental issues could be boiled down to a single black-and-white yes or no. But the reality is the answer is almost always “yes but” or “no but.” The “buts” deserve consideration. If a particular product is up for re-registration, phase-out or cancellation, what are the ramifications if it is no longer available?

We have seen the demise of many products over the past 20 years with the broad-spectrum compounds giving way to pest-specific products. Whenever such cancellations and phase-outs occur based on sound peer-reviewed science, you won’t hear much booing from the peanut gallery. It’s when the political footballs start getting punted around that the natives get restless.

Is it nice to have a product that controls a wide population of weeds, fungi or insects with one application? You bet your britches. It saves time and money and wear and tear on the equipment and the turf, and generally has less overall impact on the environment.

So, what if you lost that product because of debatable facts, global politics and lack of common sense? You might tend to be a bit frustrated and confused.

What if you lost a proven effective tool and there was no safer, viable alternative available? If you had to use more pesticides and water and fertilizer to help the turf outgrow the pest pressure, especially during grow-in, would the end justify the means? Would the environ-

Must Have? Or Nice to Have?

BY JOEL JACKSON



WE MAY NOT WIN
EVERY CONTEST,
BUT OUR RECORD
OF ACTION SHOULD
ALWAYS BE BASED
ON GOOD SCIENCE

ment really be better off? Maybe the lost product was perhaps a must have instead of a nice to have?

For the sake of argument, take the question to another level. Must we have or is it nice to have pristine, pest-free, manicured golf courses? Would golfers abandon the game in numbers so great that the industry, the professional tours, tourism and resorts would flounder and disappear?

What is the challenge and true nature of the game? Is it having flawless playing grounds or hitting the golf ball from point to point and dealing with the “rub of the green?” Your answer will vary with your dependence on the golf industry for a living. So will the answers of those who could care less about golf.

I only ask because I think we have been heading down a slippery slope the past few years. Political agendas and political correctness have been replacing common sense and peer-reviewed science in some decision-making procedures.

Giving in without due process is not an option. We may not win every contest, but our record of action should always be based on good science.

Superintendents generally tend to do the right thing, but they can get caught between demanding golfers and government policies, neither of which is likely to be the best arbiter for a sound, practical course of action.

I fear it’s getting to be a question of not what you must have or not what would be nice to have, but rather some politically expedient bureaucrat telling you what you may have.

Certified Superintendent Joel Jackson retired from Disney’s golf division in 1997 and is director of communications for the Florida GCSA.

Your Daily

HOROSCOPE



ARIES (March 21 - April 19): A new friendship is blossoming. Take your time and really get to know this person. You will be pleasantly surprised what you find out.



TAURUS (April 20 - May 20): Money seems fatter than usual lately. But just remember, you have great fortune in other aspects of your life. Embrace your family and you will get through this.



GEMINI (May 21 - June 21): Your career is on the fast track. Now is not the time to slow down. Make the most of every available opportunity that your work presents to you.



CANCER (June 22 - July 22): Happiness is on its way. You've been through a lot and now it's your turn to shine. Be sure to take some time just for you. You truly deserve it!



LEO (July 23 - August 22): You are the center of attention. People rely on you not only for advice, but also for a good laugh. So keep it up, your fun spirit is contagious.



VIRGO (August 23 - September 22): It's time to take a stand. You should no longer remain on both sides of an issue. Instead, put your foot down and let others know exactly what you think.



LIBRA (September 23 - October 22): Love is in the air. Your relationship with the one you love will soon get even stronger. You are about to receive an even greater commitment.



SCORPIO (October 23 - November 21): It's time to let things go. The past is the past, and you should only be looking forward. "Forgive and forget" is the new motto you should live by.



SAGITTARIUS (November 22 - December 21): Knowledge truly is power. It's time to use your brain to its full advantage. Seek out opportunities in the workplace to show off your capabilities. Expect rewards!



CAPRICORN (December 22 - January 19): Be sure to listen carefully. Your ears are your most effective form of communication. Others will appreciate your willingness to hear them out.



AQUARIUS (January 20 - February 18): It's time for a break. Use that vacation time you've been saving up for a spontaneous trip. It will re-energize your mind and body for the rest of the year.



PISCES (February 19 - March 20): Do you like surprises? There is a big one in your future. Be alert, because this is one surprise that is going to change your life for the better.

DON'T COUNT ON THIS.

Certain golf architects from the early 20th century believed course design would evolve in the future, even hinting that some of their timeless (it turns out) creations would appear dated.

Masters like Alister MacKenzie, George Thomas and Robert Hunter felt that improved construction techniques and overall wisdom would allow for the creation of more subtly strategic and ruggedly natural designs.

They envisioned landscapes converted into intricately designed fields of play yet built and maintained in such a way that a passing car would not know they had just seen a golf course. These natural settings would allow golfers to leave their troubles behind while touring a wondrous landscape for a few hours. If well-designed, they would provide a unique test of skill but allow golfers to feel rejuvenated no matter how lousy their golf games were.

This links-inspired architectural vision not only required educating players on the merits of natural golf but also necessitated careful construction practices, a meticulous maintenance meld and an overall embrace of the native environment.

The game traveled off into unforeseen directions and their vision was forgotten by most. Though we are seeing a wave of courses embracing many of the links fundamentals, all facilities would benefit from their vision.

In recent years, the industry has made huge strides to improve its image environmentally. Pesticide use and water use have been curtailed and an overall appreciation of golf's place in nature is now being acknowledged by even the most strident of one-time golf despisers.

As cities grow, we all know that golf courses have become valuable wildlife stations for birds and other cool critters. Notwithstanding the Canada geese issue, wildlife has to be embraced by the golf industry not only for its reputation but to enhance the golfer's experience. And to relieve superintendents of the unfair burden of killing wildlife.

The aforementioned master architects were infatuated with the notion of a "contest with nature." As a recreational pastime, golf courses could merge the best elements of hockey, fish-

Keep it Real: Embrace Nature

BY GEOFF SHACKELFORD



THERE'S A
WONDERFUL
REASSURANCE FELT
BY GOLFERS IN
SEEING THE RETURN
OF SPECIES FOR
THEIR BREEDING
OR MIGRATING
SEASONS

ing, baseball, tennis and hunting onto one unique landscape.

Minus the bloodshed.

The old architects knew from links golf that two elements kept the early Scots coming back every day: the surprises that awaited each round and the joy of getting to know a home course's quirks, local flavor and comforting predictability.

Spotting wildlife on the course is the simplest and most satisfying of pleasures. There's a wonderful reassurance felt by golfers in seeing the return of species for their breeding or migrating seasons.

We've all known the macho superintendent who hunts but after a few years at his course goes from wanting to eliminate all pesky critters to enjoying them or protecting their rituals despite cries from heartless members.

Or go to the construction site of a course and hear about all of the annoying red tape required to accommodate wildlife. Then go back and hear the pleasure in the voices of those watching golfers play the course as native birds continue to enjoy their home. All thanks to precautions taken during construction.


Birdwatching (or birding) is the fastest-growing outdoor activity in America, with 52 million Americans calling themselves "birders." Children make up a surprising portion of this birding population, meaning many future golfers will be that much more likely to stay with the game if their local course is populated with interesting species.

The incentives for embracing wildlife are aplenty, but the extra effort to preserve the lives of native habitat comes down to making golf courses what they should be: a contest with nature, in the most natural setting possible.

Contributing Editor Geoff Shackelford can be reached at geoffshac@aol.com.

COUNT ON DIMENSION[®] NOT TO STAIN.



 Dow AgroSciences
Dimension[®]
Specialty Herbicide

WORKS ALL SEASON | CONTROLS NEWLY EMERGED CRABGRASS | NEVER STAINS

Visit www.DimensionHerbicide.com for university trials.

*Trademark of Dow AgroSciences LLC. State restrictions on the sale and use of Dimension apply. Consult the label before purchase or use for full details. Always read and follow label directions.
T14-813-001 (8/05) BR 010-60366 510-M2-402-05

Civic Superman

With a one-way ticket out of the only town in which he'd worked, **Mark Woodward** could have left his heart in Mesa. Instead, he left behind a legacy in municipal employment (and a slightly less-glamorous body part)

STORY AND PHOTOGRAPHS BY THOMAS SKERNIVITZ, MANAGING EDITOR



he discomfort in Mark Woodward's gut wasn't a case of the butterflies. It *could* have been, considering the job interview ahead of him. And it *should* have been, considering at stake was the career of a lifetime — the chance to manage San Diego's three municipal golf facilities, including the site of the 2008 U.S. Open, picturesque Torrey Pines.

Instead, his woes went beyond nerves, deeper literally than the pit of his stomach. In August 2004, a month after he had mailed a rather healthy resume to city hall in San Diego, Woodward began suffering the symptoms of diverticulitis. The condition — an inflammation of the lining of the large intestine — prevented select foods, particularly nuts and seeds, from passing through his colon.

"It was very painful," Woodward says. "And I used to eat a lot of popcorn."

He kissed the kernels goodbye, but the condition persisted. Ultimately, surgery to remove 10 inches of his colon was scheduled at Desert Samaritan Hospital in his long-time home of Mesa, Ariz. The date: Nov. 18.

While preparing to go under the knife, Woodward learned he had made the first cut for the Torrey Pines gig. That meant an hour-long flight to Southern California for an interview. The take-it-or-leave-it date: Nov. 16.

"My first interview was held two days before my surgery," Woodward says. "So I was in pain going through the anticipation of surgery. It was quite a process."

Apparently, the misery didn't hurt his prospects. On Jan. 7 — following a most eventful 2004 in which he also re-married and



Healthy and anything but homesick, Mark Woodward couldn't be happier now that he's operating out of Torrey Pines in San Diego.

served as president of the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America — the City of San Diego named Woodward its golf operations manager. He started Feb. 15.

"It was an emotional rollercoaster because I wouldn't hear anything for a month or so, then I would hear I had an interview, then I wouldn't hear anything again," Woodward says. "So it was an

up-and-down process during my illness. Things move very slowly in municipal government."

Woodward would know. The City of Mesa signed his paychecks for 31 years. In turn, he earned every penny, his former boss says, and evolved into the perfect candidate to operate Torrey Pines and its sister facilities, Balboa Park and Mission Bay.

"I knew if they ever got a chance to interview Mark, he'd have the job," says Joe Holmwood, Mesa's community services manager and former parks and recreation director. "Mark isn't your typical golf superintendent. He's progressed beyond that."

As Mesa's parks and recreation administrator, Woodward oversaw two golf courses (Dobson Ranch and Riverview), a tennis facility, the Chicago Cubs spring training site, a camping reservation and the city cemetery. "Every 10 minutes I was wearing a different hat," he says.

A different hat ... with the same old smile.

"Mark's greatest asset was his customer-service skills. That's one of the reasons he surfaced to the top as one of our better administrators," Holmwood says. "He was a good communicator and he represented the city and our parks and recreation division very, very well."

Woodward arrived in Mesa in 1974 with a bachelor's degree from Arizona State University in environmental resources in agriculture. At Dobson Ranch and Riverview he progressed from assistant superintendent to superintendent to golf administrator and, in 1986, became certified.

"Mark started out as a hands-on,"
Continued on page 30

Continued from page 29

front-line golf guy. I mean, he was a specialist," Holmwood says. "Over the years, though, he was transformed into a general manager of a whole array of facilities, some of which had to do with turf, but a lot of them didn't."

Bitten by the management bug, Woodward in 1997 collected a master's degree in business administration from the University of Phoenix. He started lecturing annually at the National Institute of Golf Management in Wheeling, W. Va. "I was interested in the revenue side of golf as much as the expenditure side of golf," he says. "I started looking into things like golf car revenue, and greens fee revenue and food and beverage revenue. I was looking at the big picture of the operation. It was very enlightening and very interesting."

The politicians in San Diego certainly appreciated Woodward's versatility. Ellen Oppenheim, the city's director of parks and recreation during the job search and now its deputy city manager, says Woodward's business acumen separated him from other superintendent applicants but not at the expense of agronomic savvy.

"In the final analysis, the product we offer is so dependent on those course conditions for users that I wanted to make sure the person

The maintenance crew at Torrey Pines has set its sights on perfecting the South Course, site of the 2008 U.S. Open.



leading our program really brought a depth of knowledge in that arena to help us," she says. "And Mark had demonstrated in a variety of venues and programs (in Mesa) his ability to manage people and resources and to do so in a very positive way."

Surprisingly, Woodward had little remorse leaving Mesa despite being "kind of the golf guy" there, he says. A new job, new wife and newfound appreciation for health — "I'm damn sure I don't want to go through what I went through three or four months last year" — essentially added up to a new life. So why look back, he figured.

"I have a lot of roots there, but for me (leaving) wasn't tough at all," he says. "I don't like to get stuck in my little box. I had spent enough time in Mesa. Even though my job changed every few years and it was very exciting taking on new responsibilities, the magic number for retirement in Mesa was 30 years. So once I had my 30 years in, I was going to do something different. It was just a matter of time."

Not that Mesa and the rest of Arizona will soon forget Woodward. His is the state's first family of greenskeeping, beginning with Woodward's late grandfather, superintendent Jay D. Woodward. "That's who started this whole mess," Mark jokes.

Woodward's son, Matt, from his first marriage, was the superintendent at Tubac Golf Resort until forming a landscaping and sign company last year. His daughter, Erin, on Oct. 29 will marry Cody Swirczynski, the superintendent at Revere Golf Club's Concord Course in

Continued on page 32

