



SHOW BIZ

BY LARRY AYLWARD AND DAVID FRABOTTA

The big news of the week in Southern California during the Golf Industry Show in February was ... Britney Spears shaving her head?

That's L.A.-L.A. land for you.

Britney's baldness was the big headline when the GIS kicked off Feb. 19 in Anaheim. Personally, we thought John Deere & Co.'s acquisition of LESCO was bigger news. So was The Toro Co.'s announcement that all of its diesel-powered golf course equipment will be "Biodiesel Ready" by 2008. On top of that, there was a slew of new product introductions. And, of course, there was Charlie Sifford, the first African-American to win a PGA Tour event, receiving the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America's Old Tom Morris Award.

Hence, we beg to argue the most-important thing going on in SoCal was Britney at the barbershop.

This year's version of the Golf Industry Show also marked the debut of the Club Managers Association of America (CMAA) to the event. As expected, total attendance (23,109), number of exhibitors (981), square feet of

exhibition space (291,250) and qualified buyers (9,697) were up from previous years.

We would like to tell you we went surfing and star watching while in SoCal, but we rarely made it out of the Anaheim Convention Center. But that's show business for you ... trade-show business, that is.

Here are some (but not all) of the highlights from the show:

Well-deserved Award

Tiger Woods calls him Grandpa. The rest of the world just calls him a hero.

"I wish he would send Grandpa a couple of nickels," Charles L. Sifford joked about his relationship with Woods in front of about 2,500 attendees during his acceptance speech of the 2007 Old Tom Morris Award.

Sifford fought the Professional Golf Association's whites-only clause beginning in the 1960s. His memories about the game dripped from his many anecdotes about his Tour days, family and more than seven decades of playing golf. And his love for golf was illustrated

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The Golf Industry Show made its own headlines in L.A.-L.A. Land

PHOTO BY: BRUCE MATHEWS



Charlie Sifford (above, left) receives the Old Tom Morris Award from GCSAA Past President Sean Hoolehan. Joe Theismann (right) hands off an autographed football to Ohio State University Professor Karl Danneberger, also a *Golfdom* columnist.

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in his refreshingly poignant summary: “The best game in the world is the game you play with yourself (against the golf course).”

Sifford won twice on the PGA Tour and also captured the 1975 PGA Seniors’ Championship and won the 1980 Suntree Classic in Melbourne, Australia.

Just like anyone who has played golf, Sifford knows there are no certainties, except one. “I’ve been playing for 73 years, and one thing about this game is that it makes your hair fall out and makes you ugly,” he said.

Theismann: Show Your Appreciation

If you’re a football fan, you remember the play. If you witnessed it, you haven’t forgotten it.

It occurred Nov. 18, 1985, on Monday Night Football. Millions of TV fans watched Joe Theismann break his right leg in two places when New York Giants linebacker Lawrence Taylor sacked the Washington Redskins quarterback. It was a gruesome sight. It was a replay you didn’t want to watch over again, even to this day.

When Theismann took the stage at Dis-

ney’s California Adventure Park to speak to about 1,500 golf course superintendents and other industry professionals — who were guests of Syngenta Professional Products as part of the company’s sixth-annual Green Carpet Premiere — you wondered if he would bring up that fateful play, the last of Theismann’s stellar 11-year career.

Most players would probably prefer to forget an awful career-ending injury. But the setback was the basis for Theismann’s 45-minute speech.

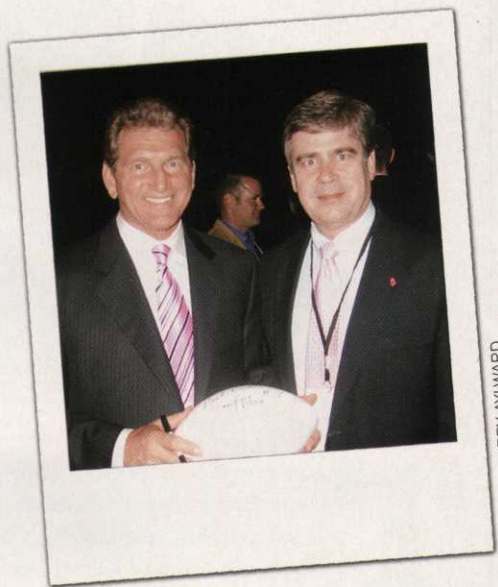


PHOTO BY: LARRY AYLWARD



Anteater (30,000 BC)



Frying pan (1847)



Sodium bicarbonate (1836)





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Theismann says the injury provided the most-powerful wakeup call he has ever heard. Before it, Theismann was living the charmed life of a star NFL player. He helped lead the Redskins to a Super Bowl title in 1982. He was named the league's MVP in 1983. He had a \$1 million contract. He was building a football legacy.

Problem was, Theismann had become a legend in his own mind.

"I had become the single-most despicable human being that walked the face of the

earth," Theismann said. "I thought I needed absolutely no one because I was a star."

And then the devastating injury occurred. In the flick of a second on the game clock, Theismann's 11-year career was over.

Afterward, however, there were many Sundays to reflect on what happened and what would come. Theismann was 35 years old and

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(Clockwise from left) Magician Seth Kramer dazzles showgoers with his card tricks at Agrium Advanced Technologies' booth. Johnny Miller talks about grain during his Opening Session speech. Joe DiPaola, golf market manager at Syngenta Professional Products, shows GCSAA CEO Steve Mona the company's "Wall of Devotion," which featured 2,000 names of notable superintendents.



Blowtorch (1926)



Shoe (1954)



Newspaper (1962)



Show Biz

PHOTO COURTESY: BASF

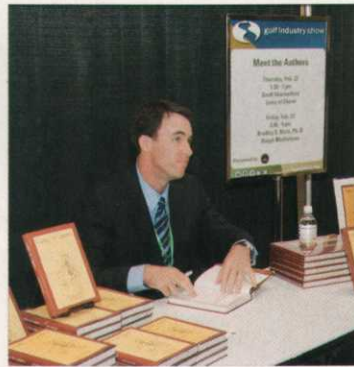


(Above) The amazing Tyson Mao shows off his Rubik's Cube skills at BASF Professional Turf & Ornamentals' booth. (Top) The bet here is that folks enjoyed themselves at BASF's annual party at the House of Blues. (Right) *Golf-dom* columnist and golf architecture expert Geoff Shackelford autographs his latest book, "Lines of Charm," for a showgoer.



PHOTO COURTESY: BASF

PHOTO BY: BRUCE MATHEWS



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thought his world had ended. What Theismann kept thinking about was how the crowd responded to his injury.

"As I went out of that stadium, 55,000 people and maybe some of you in this room tonight, stood up and gave this selfish man an ovation like he never heard before in his

life," Theismann said. "Fifty-five thousand people said thank you to a man who thought he needed absolutely no one."

That ovation sticks with Theismann to this day. It taught him that he needs others more than he ever realized. And the feelings the ovation stirred in him when he was down and out made Theismann realize he must provide ovations in peoples' lives.

That was his take-home message. Theismann urged attendees to provide praise. He told the golf course superintendents in the audience to make it a priority to hand out "atta boys" to their employees for jobs well done.

"Let them know you appreciate what they do, the hours they work and the time they put in," Theismann said.

Oozing With Enthusiasm

"Everything is impossible until it works," Pat Croce said with intense conviction.

Croce's life proves people have few boundaries, and he's eager to tell you about it. He has made accomplished surgeons and investment bankers eat their words. He has even helped a recovering brain surgery patient speak again with an impromptu phone call.

Croce earnestly believes that every

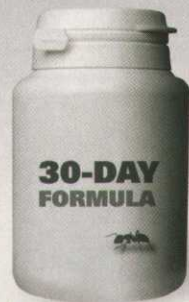
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Magnifying glass (1977)



Garden hose (1984)



30-day fire ant formula (2005)



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Quotables

Special Edition: From the Show

"If you want to be the best, you have to be willing to do what no one else is willing to do."

— *Johnny Miller, on what it takes to succeed, in his speech during the GIS's Opening Session.*

"The time is right for Toro and the industry to commit to this effort."

— *Mike Hoffman, chairman and CEO of The Toro Co., on Toro's announcement that all of its diesel-powered golf course, sports fields and grounds equipment will be "Biodiesel Ready" by 2008.*

"Nobody is successful in life without support at home."

— *Joe Vargas, turfgrass scientist and professor at Michigan State University, on receiving USGA's 2007 Green Section Award.*

"I had to come to Anaheim to have an adult beverage with the superintendent [located] three miles away [from me back home]."

— *Michael Underwood, certified superintendent of the Pecan Plantation Country Club in Granbury, Texas, on staying in touch with his peers.*

"If you could turn golf into a sugar-coated breakfast cereal, we'd all be rich."

— *The Golf Channel's Adam Barr on growing the game with junior players, during his speech at the GIS's Opening Session.*

"I want to speak to every superintendent in the audience tonight ... each of you does a magnificent job with your courses. ... You treat a golf course like you treat one of your own children. You nurture it, you work with it, you make it grow, you make it green, you make it better, you make it an enjoyable experience. ... I applaud you for your hard work."

— *Joe Theismann, former star quarterback of the Washington Redskins and current sports broadcaster, speaking to superintendents during Syngenta Professional Products' Green-Carpet Premiere.*

"It's time for us to start paying attention — no pun intended — to what's happening in our backyard."

— *Stacey Pines, Grassroots Manager for Responsible Industry for a Sound Environment (RISE), urging chemical companies to watch what's happening in their areas regarding potential anti-pesticide activity during a breakfast sponsored by RISE.*

"If I was a caddy for Phil Mickelson, there's no way he'd lose as many tournaments as he does."

— *Charlie Sifford, who was awarded the GCSAA's 2007 Old Tom Morris Award, on getting a few wins for Lefty.*

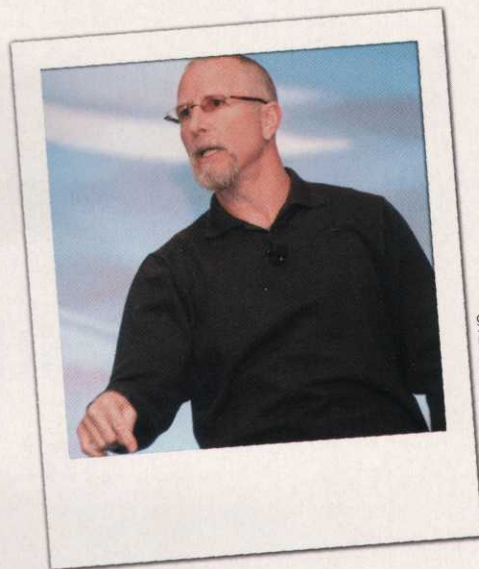


PHOTO BY: BRUCE MATHEWS

Pat Croce, who spoke at the General Session, told showgoers to "pursue your heart's desires with focused determination."

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person can have the same impact on people's lives with genuine interest, appreciation and abundant gratitude of the people you meet.

"All of you have this extraordinary power to add or subtract to the happiness of the people you meet," he told about 1,800 attendees during the GIS's General Session.

He walks the talk. Croce launched a sports-medicine franchise that grew into 40 stores when everyone told him the business model wouldn't work. After selling that company, he bought the Philadelphia 76ers, a dismal last-place team at the time. Within five years, they won the division and went to the playoffs.

The worst-to-first success story propelled him to a new emotional and professional peak. But "within the time frame of a minute or a month, your life can change drastically."

Just weeks later, his leg was almost severed in a motorcycle accident, and doctors told him it would be a long shot to walk again without prosthetics. But a bounding Croce proved that the human spirit could overcome any obstacle.

"When you enthusiastically pursue your heart's desires with focused determination, the universe will create circumstances that enable your dreams to become reality," he said.

Croce told the story of a random e-mail from a grade-schooler that asked Croce to call

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(Top) Joel Jackson, *Golfdom* columnist and director of communications for the Florida GCSA, shows off his badges. Read them closely. (Top right) Jason Regan won the golf championship. (Bottom, clockwise from top) *Golfdom* Publisher Pat Roberts mingles with Bayer Environmental Science's Bryan Gooch and Neil Cleveland. Partiers played pool, drank beer and helped raise money for St. Jude Children's Research Hospital at the Floratine University Kegger. People rose bright and early to attend the Responsible Industry for a Sound Environment (RISE) breakfast.

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 a classmate who was recovering from brain surgery. Recovery had been slow. "What could I do? I'm no neurologist," Croce said.

He called anyway. The boy was receptive, and they made arrangements to go to a 76ers game. When he passed the phone back to his mother to make preparations, she was in tears, and she told the then-76ers president

that those were the first coherent words the boy had spoken since his last surgery. Croce was the stimulus the doctors had been hoping for, and it only took a few minutes of caring.

Best in the Land

He was the only player to score under par in the final round. Jason Regan, superintendent of Selma (Ala.) Country Club, shot a 1-under 71 in the final round to win the 2007 Golf Course Superintendents Association of America National Championship on the Pete Dye Challenge Course at Mission Hills Country Club. Regan overcame a four-stroke deficit to top second-round leader Paul Jett, the certified superintendent of Pinehurst (N.C.) No. 2. ■



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