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Golfdom

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■ U.S. OPEN PREVIEW

Mark Woodward rescues Torrey Pines from neglect to showcase a public treasure in his swan song.

BY DAVID FRABOTTA

28

About the cover

Senior Editor David Frabotta found Mark Woodward near the fourth fairway at Torrey Pines. Woodward lost a mower off the cliff just a few feet from where he's standing, but the operator bailed out in time. That's some occupational hazard.

12

Cleman's Travels

Oregon GCSA executive director's career path has taken him all over the globe.

By Larry Aylward

39

Weird Science?

Some superintendents swear by Marc Logan's agronomic method to rid greens of *Poa annua* and moss. Others are just plain skeptical.

By Anthony Pioppi

Correction: In the article titled "One-Two Punch" in the April issue of *Golfdom*, we gave the impression that Tartan fungicide, from Bayer Environmental Science, would control Pythium. However, Tartan is not registered for Pythium control. Chipco Signature fungicide, which also contains StressGard technology, is registered for Pythium control.

53

The Endurance Factor

How much shelf life do those old, half-used turf products have left in them? It depends.

By Jim Black

78

Au Courant Accessories

Manufacturers offer myriad items for the golf course.

columns

- 6 Pin High
Golf Digest Does Superintendents No Favors
- 22 Shades of Green
Tales of Tortoises, Death and Jackasses
- 24 Designs On Golf
This U.S. Open Will Be Interesting
- 26 It's Academic
With Light as the Deciding Factor
- 80 Out of Bounds
Graphic Novels

departments

- 8 Big Picture
- 10 Off the Fringe
- 20 Hole of the Month
- 60 Top Assistants
- 79 Classifieds

Turfgrass Trends

This month, *Golfdom's* practical research digest for turf managers discusses recycled wastewater and fertigation, among other topics. See pages 63-76.

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Walker. His owner is Tom Athy, the greens superintendent at the Omaha Country Club in Omaha, Neb. (Photo by: Kristen Gohr)



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Unless you've been living under a fairway mower for the past month, you've heard about Golf Digest's "How Green Is Golf?" report in the magazine's May issue. Golf Digest billed the 30-page section as "The Most Important Article We've Ever Published."

If you haven't read the piece, which focuses on golf and the environment, please take the time to do so. Some parts are very good. The piece is posted on Golf Digest's Web site.

But after reading the report, written by John Barton, you might conclude that Golf Digest doesn't do golf course superintendents any favors when it comes to promoting their image as environmental stewards.

In the article, Barton takes Augusta National Golf Club to task for its alleged conditioning practices. Barton writes: "Like the fur coat and the SUV, the 'Augusta look' — freakishly green wall-to-wall grass on a life-support system of too much water and toxic chemicals, greens running at virtually unplayable speeds, ornamental flowers all over the place — will become less admired, and even stigmatized."

Ouch!

Before I comment on Barton's take on Augusta, let me point out that Golf Digest ranked Augusta National No. 3 (behind Pine Valley Golf Club and Shinnecock Hills Golf Club) in its 2007-2008 America's 100 Greatest Golf Courses list. One question: Just what does Golf Digest admire about Augusta to rank the course so high?

Back to Barton's comments. In his rant against Augusta, Barton basically accuses Augusta superintendent Brad Owen and his staff of over-irrigating and spraying loads of dangerous chemicals to achieve abnormal-looking turf. How does Barton know this?

The bet here is that Owen, like all responsible superintendents, uses chemicals safely and water judiciously. Regarding his pesticide use, it can be assumed that Owen is using the best brand-named products money can buy because his massive maintenance budget can afford it. Many of the new pesticides, by the way, are also safer and have much lower use rates.

Golf Digest Does Supers No Favors

BY LARRY AYLWARD



SUPERINTENDENTS

ACROSS THE

COUNTRY

PROBABLY CRINGED

COLLECTIVELY

UPON READING THIS

Regarding irrigation, who cares if Owen may have went to the well a little more than he should have for Masters week? Let's not forget that the Masters equates to dollar signs with many zeroes attached to them. It's big business for golf, not to mention the local economy of the tiny town of Augusta. If Golf Digest wants to single out an entity for wasting water, it should point the finger at the guys who wash their SUVs twice a week — and leave the hoses running while doing so.

In his article, Barton also suggests that golfers turn into activists at the courses they play and lobby superintendents to reduce water and pesticide use. Superintendents across the country probably cringed collectively upon reading this.

Yes, if Carl Spackler is turning a golf course into a noxious dump by applying fungicides, herbicides and insecticides daily, the golfers ought to talk to him about cutting back his pesticide use. But I would hate to see golfers cornering someone like Merion Golf Club's Matt Shaffer, one of the best and brightest superintendents in the business, to grill him about his pesticide use on the golf course. That wouldn't be fair to Shaffer and other alike superintendents, who should be trusted in such capacities, not questioned.

Barton also writes that golfers should "support your golf course superintendent, who too often is treated as a second-class citizen, sequestered somewhere out of sight in 'the shed.'" Come again? This statement might have been true 25 years, but not today. Most superintendents are much more respected in 2008.

The moral of the Golf Digest story: While Barton calls superintendents "experts" and advises golfers to get to know them, he inadvertently bashes them throughout the piece.

Like I said, the Golf Digest article does superintendents no favors. So much for the industry getting a boost from the mainstream media.

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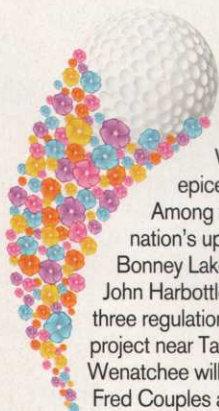
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The Big Picture

THE THINGS THAT SHAPE YOUR BUSINESS

TIDBIT OF THE MONTH



Golf Blooming in Washington State

Washington is one of the few true epicenters for golf development in America. Among the more intriguing projects in the nation's upper-lefthand corner is Cascadia in Bonney Lake, where work is continuing on a John Harbottle-designed 18, the first of perhaps three regulation courses planned for the 5,000-acre project near Tacoma. Spanish Castle Resort in East Wenatchee will feature a layout co-designed by Fred Couples and Gene Bates, with work slated for this summer. Construction is finishing up on the Harbottle-designed Palouse Ridge Golf Club on the campus of Washington State University in Pullman. In Walla Walla, site prep has commenced on Wine Valley Golf Club, a Dan Hixson design, while in Westport along the Pacific Coast is the Rick Robbins-crafted Links at Half Moon, now under construction. Two courses near Zillah in eastern Washington are either in progress or nearing groundbreaking: the Bobby Cupp-designed Zillah Lakes, to open next spring, and a 7,561-yard Michael Hurdzan layout at the new \$70 million Vineyards Resort.

For details on these and other golf projects around the United States, visit www.golfconstructionnews.com.

COURTESY OF:



Woodward Worthy



The Golf Course Superintendents Association of America picked a company man, certified superintendent Mark Woodward, as its new CEO. Woodward, who starts his new gig on July 1, has been a superintendent for more than 30 years, most recently at Torrey Pines, site of this month's U.S. Open. *Golfdom* recently asked readers: What do you think of the GCSAA's selection of Woodward to CEO of the association? Here's how 160 readers responded:

49% Woodward is a fine choice

13% Woodward is an OK choice

19% Woodward is not the best choice

18% I'm not sure

Golf Rounds Played

The percentages below represent the change in the number of rounds played in March 2008 compared to the number of rounds played in March 2007.

| REGION | MARCH | Y.T.D. |
|--|--------|--------|
| New England ME, VT, NH, MA, RI, CT | -8.9% | -7.7% |
| Middle Atlantic NY, PA, NJ | 5.7% | 8.4% |
| East North Central MI, OH, IN, IL, WI | -51.5% | -49.9% |
| West North Central ND, MN, SD, NE, KS, IA, MO | -33.7% | -32.0% |
| South Atlantic WV, DE, MD, VA, NC, SC, GA | -2.9% | -0.1% |
| Florida | -1% | 0.6% |
| South Central KY, TN, AL, MS, OK, AR, LA | -8.8% | 2.5% |
| Texas | -2.3% | 10.2% |
| Mountain MT, ID, WY, NV, UT, CO, AZ, NM | -6.3% | -1.8% |
| Pacific WA, OR, AK, HI | 2.1% | -1.4% |
| California | 1.8% | -3.1% |
| TOTAL UNITED STATES | -7.8% | -2.6% |

GOLF DATATECH

Energy Kick

It's June and golf play is in full swing around the country. Needless to say, golf course superintendents and their crews are working some long days and long hours. Hence, they need their energy. According to *Health* magazine, here are some things you can do to boost your energy.

■ **See the light** – Get the right light, and you'll have lots more energy. Sunlight is best because it contains brain-activating short-wavelength blue light. This bodes for superintendents and their crews, who are outside often.

■ **Eat meat** – Eat protein products, plant- and animal-based, throughout the day. Protein increases mental alertness and energy. Too many carbohydrates, such as breads and sweets, can make you sleepy.

■ **Meditate** – Take a few minutes to meditate throughout the day. It can boost your alertness.

■ **Clean up your sleep** – To help get a good night's sleep, fully darken your bedroom, regulate room temperature and use white noise such as a fan to help make you sleepy.





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Off The Fringe

Business briefs

Rounds Down in March, As Is Consumer Confidence

Is it a coincidence that golf rounds played were down nearly 10 percent from the previous year at the same time that consumer confidence has been sinking?

Rounds played in the United States were down 9.9 percent on same-store basis in March 2008 versus March 2007, according to the National Golf Foundation. Even with one extra weekend day in March versus last year, most regions doing relatively high volume in the month were down: Central/South Florida fell 3.1 percent; the Gulf Coast declined 1.8 percent, and South Central showed a 8.5 percent decline.

Consumer confidence has experienced a similar slump. The Conference Board Consumer Confidence Index, which had declined sharply in March, fell further in April. The Index now stands at 62.3, down from 65.9 in March. The Present Situation Index fell to 80.7 from 90.6. The Expectations Index was virtually unchanged, 50.1 versus 49.4 in March.

Home Depot Canada Phases Out Pesticides

Even though it's another country and another segment of the green industry, golf course superintendents should know that Home Depot Canada plans to voluntarily stop selling traditional pesticides and herbicides in its stores across Canada by the end of 2008 and increase its selection of environmentally friendly alternatives.

"Like our customers, we at The Home Depot, are concerned about the environment," said Annette Verschuren, president.

Briefs continue on page 14

What's That Racket?

OH, IT'S JUST ANOTHER DAY AT TORO – WHERE THEY'RE 'THINKING WAY OUT THERE' *By Larry Aylward, Editor in Chief*

Several media members got to witness a lot of racket going on at The Toro Co. last month. We're talking clatter as in "clang," "boom," "bam" and even "ping."

Actually, it was just another day at Toro, located in Bloomington, Minn., where mowers and blowers and other equipment are tested extensively for durability, performance and safety among other things. And the tests, like placing a solid metal pipe underneath the cutting unit of

a fairway mower, cause some clatter.

The media were given a tour of the Toro facilities as part of the company's media day, titled "Innovation At Its Roots." In addition to seeing the rigor that Toro's equipment is put through before it goes to market, the media also heard from several company speakers, including CEO and Chairman

Continued on page 17

Toro's Greg Janey talks to media members about the Reelmaster 5210 during media day.



PHOTO BY: LARRY AYLWARD