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# Golfdom

MARCH 2011 • VOLUME 67 • NO. 3

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BY KEN MOUM

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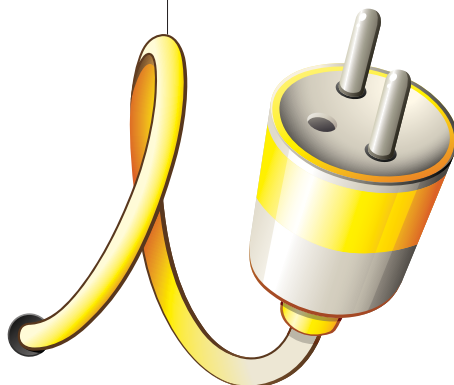
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**T**his Golf Industry Show was an amazing experience for me. As a journalist, I'm used to asking the questions. One of the biggest surprises for me at this GIS was how many people were asking *me* the questions.

Honestly, I was flattered. Often it feels like I'm writing in a void, but then I attend the GIS and people bombard me with questions about my job change, about my recent stories and travel experiences, proving to me they're reading my stuff every month... it's a flattering experience.

If you didn't get a chance to catch up with me for a beer or three at Miller's Ale House in Orlando, I thought I'd share with you the most commonly asked questions of your pal Seth:

**Wow, man, editor-in-chief of *Golfdom*? Isn't it great? Cheers! I'm so excited, and I love it.**

**Did you get 'let go' from GCSAA, or...? I'm happy to report that I was not let go from GCSAA, that I was still gainfully employed there when the guys from *Golfdom* called me up to discuss 'an opportunity.'** My last day at GCSAA coincided with the company holiday party, so, in my mind, I pretended it was my own going-away party.

**So what the heck is really going on at GCSAA?** A similar thing that is going on throughout the industry. How big is your crew right now? Smaller than it was six years ago? GCSAA is in the same boat. It's just a rough time.

The staff members at the GCSAA are trying their best with the pieces they still have. But, in my opinion, morale was low there. It's the same way in a lot of places right now, where you can sense the gloom. I hope they all catch a few breaks soon, because they deserve it.

**Whose fault is it? It's my fault.**

*Just kidding.*

It's hard to point a finger. The GCSAA leadership understands they need to diversify revenue to be less dependent on the GIS.

I have some speculations, but they're just that, speculations. Besides, who cares whose fault it is? A better question is, "How are they going to bounce back?" (And I'll save that one for a future column.)

## Questions and Answers

BY SETH JONES



**"SO, ARE YOU JUST GOING TO ROAST THE GCSAA NOW THAT YOU'RE WITH GOLFDOM?"**

**OK, so what really happened to (former GCSAA CEO) Mark Woodward?** Oh man, check out this Blake Griffin dunk they're about to show on *SportsCenter*!

**Jerk. ...So, are you just going to roast the GCSAA now that you're with *Golfdom*?** You know, I'm going to do my job, be fair and make *Golfdom* the best magazine it can be. I'm going to work my tail off to get the best contributors, the best stories, the best covers.

So I won't be unfair to any one organization. I learned that early on in journalism school. I'm not supposed to have a political agenda, or, even worse, some irrational vendetta. I think that's a sad, tired way to try to draw readers in the industry.

**How'd you play at Tournament?** Horribly, thank you. But I had a good time. Although, there are now nine more GCSAA members who know that being a good golfer was not one of my job requirements.

**What's it like going from *GCM* to *Golfdom*?** Oh, man. First of all, you have to understand, those are my friends over at *GCM*. I worked with those guys for 12 years! It's a wonderful team.

It is a huge difference, though. The best way to put it is this way: When I was at *GCM*, it was like working with a family.

Now with *Golfdom*, it's like I moved out of mom and dad's house and into "Animal House." Bluto is shouting "TOGA!" and they're talking about driving a tank through the next GIS. Seriously, it's a great group here, an anything-is-possible team. Not only did I get a new job, I got a new group of friends, along with a beautiful window office in downtown Cleveland.

**That's awesome. Ready for another beer? TOGA!**

---

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# Off The Fringe

## Lebanon Acquires PHC

**L**ebanon Seaboard Corp., parent company of LebanonTurf, announced recently that the company has acquired the U.S. horticultural and turf division of Plant Health Care (PHC), Inc.

Established in 1995, PHC is regarded as a pioneer among manufacturers of biologically based products for all segments of the green industry. The company is known for its research applied to fertility products incorporating beneficial microbes, mycorrhizal fungi and soil nutrients.



"PHC products add to our ability to create both environmental and economic benefits for our customers and capitalize on a movement throughout the green industry toward natural systems and biological products that promote plant health," Katherine Bishop, president and CEO of Lebanon Seaboard, said of the acquisition.

The acquisition of PHC complements Lebanon Seaboard's 2009 acquisition of Novozymes' turf and landscape business and its 2008 acquisition of the Emerald Isle line of foliar and granular fertilizer products from Milliken Chemical. ■

Want to get your news in *Golfdom*?  
E-mail Seth Jones, editor in chief, at  
sjones@questex.com.



## Cal-Riverside Halts Diagnostics Lab

**I**n a letter to the industry, Frank Wong, Ph.D., Cooperative Extension specialist at the University of California-Riverside, announced that as of March 7, 2011, their turf diagnostic lab services would no longer be in operation.

The lab collected more than 500 samples a year and supported the industry in California and surrounding states. But because of the reduction of several funding opportunities, personnel changes and the failure to get larger grant funding outside the turf industry, the lab was no longer sustainable.

"The true cost of the diagnostic program was subsidized by funding from UC Riverside, cooperative research with chemical companies, other grant resources or GCSAA contributions, and we have for the most part made it work," Wong said in the letter. "For 2011 we will try to reorganize under a new business plan to meet the diagnostic lab needs of the industry,

and relaunch the service under a different model as soon as we can."

Paul Mayes, CGCS at Hemet (Calif.) Golf Club, said the news was discouraging and would complicate his work maintaining Hemet GC, an 18-hole public course set in California's Hemet Valley.

"It's a shame, because other than Larry (Stowell, Ph.D.) at PACE Turf down in San Diego, there's nothing out here," he said. "I probably used (UC Riverside's lab) four to six times a year."

Wong stated in his letter that the annual cost to maintain the lab was \$80,000, while on average it only brought in \$30,000 a year over the last three years.

"It's unfortunate that they can't support golf courses," Mayes said. "Hopefully they can get the funding fixed and get it back on track. But it's just like everything else these days, everyone's seeing cutbacks – it's the almighty dollar." ■