Golf Summit 90:
Industry must give ground on environment

BY MARK LESLIE

The golf industry must do some "serious soul-searching" about the magnitude of its projects and undertake research to disclaim "pseudo-scientists" if it is to continue to thrive, according to government and industry officials.

Speaking at Golf Summit 90 in Palm Springs, Calif., experts from the Environmental Protection Agency, Golf Course Superintendents Association of America, United States Golf Association and American Society of Golf Course Architects agreed obstacles to golf development will get tougher and laws harsher.

The obstacles include golfers’ demand for green and low-cut courses; misinformed environmentalists and the lack of scientific information on pesticide and fertilizer use; an upcoming re-registration of List A pesticides; tightening wetlands regulations; and localized anti-development sentiment.

"But you shouldn’t see the environment as a roadblock..." said EPA Associate Administrator Lewis S.W. Crampton. "A pleasant environment is a very important part of enjoying the game."

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Californians vote no

BY PETER BLAIS

California voters last month turned a major thumbs down on two ballot questions that would have banned many of the pesticides used on golf courses.

“We’re obviously pleased that our efforts were successful,” said Raymond Davies, president of the Golf Course Superintendents Association of Southern California which united with other regional California superintendent associations to fight the Big Green and CAREFUL initiatives.

“But we know the issue isn’t dead. This is just the first inning in a long ball game. Now we’ll just have to wait and see what type of initiative or other tactic the environmentalists come up with next time.”

Sixty-four percent of the electorate voted against Big Green, which would have banned up to 80 percent of common pesticides.

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Americans share knowledge in Europe

BY VERN PUTNEY

Golf Course Europe drew many of the leading names in the American golf industry to Paris in late November to discuss the state of the game in Europe, considered among the most fertile breeding grounds for new golf course development in the world.

"Golf has its roots in Europe, but now is a universal sport," said Dan Maples, president of the American Society of Golf Course Architects.

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The clubs will introduce the concept of marketable memberships into the United States. They are intended to answer the need of business executives for "luxurious and exclusive settings for social, recreational and business meetings," Killip said.

IGM "will be looking into hard options on land in San Francisco, Los Angeles and New York over the next couple of months," Killip said, indicating the company would buy those parcels in late spring. It will issue preferred stock next mid September through October, he said.

 Marketable memberships are new to the United States but have been successful for 25 years in Japan, William S. Deakyne, former senior vice president and director of the $20 billion Jennison Associates Capital Corp., founded IGM to bring the concept here.

"We've had extremely favorable reactions," Killip said. "The time is now for this kind of orientation. Add the IRS implications on the private social club, and the fact that members can have clubs in a number of cities so they can go in and take their clients to their club...

"We made this shift to the business orientation last year, and it was the best shift we could have made because that's where the market is going," Killip said.

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