Briebs

JAPAN CITES VON HAGGE COURSE

Von Hagge Design Associates of Spring, Texas, has learned its Horai Country Club in Mattoon, Illinois, will receive the country's Best New Course award for 1990.

Earlier, Robert von Hagge accepted "Le Premier Trophée Du Meilleur: Golf De L'Annee" (the first trophy for the best golf course of the year) for France 1990 for the Golf du Seignosse.

Last year, the firm's Golf International "Les Bordes" received the only new five-star rating in 20 years on the European continent. Golf du Seignosse.

Golf Course architect and builder Rick Briddle of Tectonic, Inc. in Longmont, Colo., agreed. Putting the cost - 1 for the cheap choice in mixing soil, according to experts in the Soil Blending Industry.

Infl golf future bright

By Peter Blais

The opportunities for overseas golf course development are excellent in most of the 126 countries where golf is played, according to a panel assembled at November's Golf Summit 90.

The panel was moderated by Gary Wiren, president of Golf Around the World and master teacher at PGA National Golf Club.

Panel members included John Gordon, managing editor of Score magazine, Canada's largest monthly golf publication; Jillian Yorke, editor of the magazine Japan Golf Report and vice president of International Golf Research Institute; Australian journalist Douglass Mason; Lige Eangeo of the Swedish Golf Federation; and John Laupheimer, staff vice president of International Management Group.

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By Mark Leslie

A million things can kill a green and there is no excuse for opting for the cheap choice in mixing soil, according to experts in the soil-blending industry.

"The top architects and the aggressive leaders in the industry are spacing the blending into contracts," said Troy McNeill of Transamerican Soil Blenders in Lubbock, Texas. "The greens are the heartbeat of the golf course. If you don't have good greens, people won't play your course."

"A first-class green only costs two to three percent more than a third-class green. The money saved won't be saved a year later when you have to rebuild a green," said Tom Briddle of Tectonic, Inc. in Longmont, Colo. Briddle, who said he recently blended the soil for a 22-green facility for $18,000, could "On a $3-million golf course that's only one-tenth of one percent. The average cost of buying the materials and building 19 greens is $275,000 to $300,000, and no one's going to take a chance with that kind of money not having it right."

Though there are only a handful of blenders in North America, the field is expected to grow, since, as Briddle said: "Anything that's successful always attracts more players."

Christine Faulks, president of Greensmix of Waupaca, Wis., explained the rising importance of blending: "In the past five years or so the whole industry has become more sophisticated. And, in turn, a lot of contractors have been burned — gotten into lawsuits, and had jobs shut down — because their mix was not accurate.

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Pesticides last hurdle for major Sherman Hollow project in Vermont

By Vern Putney

HUNTINGTON, Vt. — The proposed golf course at Sherman Hollow here, which since 1984 has suffered more rejections than 56 Atlanta Hawks guard Spivey Webb attempting a scoop shot on basket-guarding Patrick Ewing of the New York Knicks, tried for the umpteenth time to live up to the Tenth Commandment of the state Environmental Board.

The board held rigid to its dictum, "Thou shalt not permeate the ground with pesticides not meeting our standards."

Developer Paul Truax and Sherman Hollow, Inc. associates, cleared on nine counts, have been relentless in pursuing golf course approval, considered a necessary first phase to transform this chosen land into a destination resort, bedecked with a hotel, restaurant, conference center and swank condominiums. The original project price tag was $82 million.

Truax and partners, while declining to be specific on costs aimed at obtaining approval, won't quibble with a "hundreds of thousands of dollars" guesstimate. The current cross-country ski area can not survive unless allowed to expand, Truax ventured.

The par-4, 331-yard 4th hole at Cypress Knoll Golf Course in Palm Coast, Fla., is vintage Gary Player design. The tee shot is critical, carrying a wild-growth area. The second shot is a short iron to a green guarded by three pot bunkers.

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Blenders, golf courses a perfect mix

By Mark Leslie

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"A first-class green only costs two to three percent more than a third-class green. The money saved won't be saved a year later when you have to rebuild a green," said Tom Briddle of Tectonic, Inc. in Longmont, Colo. Briddle, who said he recently blended the soil for a 22-green facility for $18,000, could only question why a developer would choose to mix the soil with a front-end loader or rototiller.

Golf course architect and builder Jim Fazio of Juno Beach, Fla., agreed. Putting the cost of blending for 19 holes at $30,000, he said: "On a $3-million golf course that's only one-tenth of one percent. The average cost of buying the materials and building 19 greens is $275,000 to $300,000, and no one's going to take a chance with that kind of money of not having it right."

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Sherman Hollow faces pesticide hurdles

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selectmen have sent a package of letters to Chittenden County's state senators, declaring that the controversial Act 250 process has let them down. They contend that "during the Sherman Hollow permitting debacle, several other (golf courses) were operating with little or no opposition and/or scrutiny." Truax concurs, accusing the District Commission of holding Sherman Hollow to tougher environmental standards than other Vermont golf courses.

Michael O'Connor, serving as representative on the Vermont Industry Policy Board, an executive board under the Vermont Golf Association, strongly disagrees.

O'Connor, course superintendent at Basin Harbor CC, Vergennes, perhaps is the most knowledgeable and informed on the Sherman Hollow fighting. He's been president of the Vermont superiors and prominent on area and state environmental boards.

Said O'Connor: "Currently the industry is comprising 54 golf facilities in Vermont, has expended more than $575,000 just in meeting the current pesticide regulations adopted Oct. 25, 1990. The Vermont Industry Policy Board has raised an additional $25,000 just to comply with the industry's need to hire a turfgrass position within the Vermont Department of Agriculture."

O'Connor is concerned with golf's good name in the wake of development. While it bothers him that Vermont is perceived by the rest of the country as the villain, he applauds the applicant's decision to appeal.

Decisions like this, left untouched, he said, set a precedent that others would have to overcome. He hopes for a settlement soon in a case that has become known as "Politics, Pesticides and a Permit."

Opponents contend they must come up with their own Stamp Act and propaganda campaign to counter "official" mailing. "They (town fathers) might as well have a funding envelope," commented one dissenter.

While project opponents lack the impressive array of scientists enlisted by Sherman Hollow advocates, they have a distinguished voice.

Dr. Hugh Brown from the University of Vermont, representing nonsayers, testified that when he used his input data, he found three times as much runoff and 40 to 60 times more leaching than the model had shown by Sherman Hollow.

If the state board overturns the second and latest District 4 Commission veto, Sherman Hollow can proceed with course construction. Should the Board dash Sherman Hollow hopes, the Vermont Supreme Court appears the next step. Or, Truax could start from scratch with a new set of hearings studying all potential impacts of the golf course.

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