Environment, finances dominate world of golf course designers and builders

By Mark Leslie

E nvironmental regulations and protective measures are the most critical issues facing the golf course industry, according to a Golf Course News survey of course designers and architects.

"The key task was getting the Penncross bentgrass planted and up before the heat of summer," said Jones. "There are long periods requiring use of your long irons as well as briar-type adverse-and-flip par 4s.

"Talamore requires both finesse and position of the golfer," Jones noted.

"Talamore at Pinehurst, which has been in the growin stage since May. "It's just shy of a miracle the course is ready. Chandler Masters, the course superintendent, has had his work cut out for him," said General Manager John Muto.

"The rains in this past summer required more sodding than originally anticipated. The key task was to get the Penngrass bentgrass planted and up before the heat of summer. "We squeaked by with the planting of the greens," Muto said. "Like most superintendents, Chandler has babied them and they are in fine shape."

Palmers careful to protect, use Biscayne Bay

MIAMI, Fla. - Deering Bay Yacht and Country Club, Arnold Palmer and Mother Nature have created a unique 18-hole course for an exclusive residential community on an environmentally sensitive site on Biscayne Bay.

"We have several developers who have spent $300,000 to $400,000 on engineering and environmental studies and are not even close to breaking ground," Clark said. "In a lot of instances you have to have very deep pockets. And it all gets reflected with the consumer, who is the golfer. A lot of these are public, daily-fee courses — things we need desperately. The counties and communities are in favor of the golf course, but still have to go through the arduous permitting process. In one case we have in Washington, D.C., seven different regulatory agencies were involved in just the irrigation pond.

"We squeaked by with the planting of the greens," Muto said. "Like most superintendents, Chandler has babied them and they are in fine shape."

COUPLE MOVES INTO WORLD OF GOLF

WOOSTER, Ohio - Betty and Earl Hawkins, owners of the local Hawkins Cafeteria and the Hawkins Market supermarket chain, are branching out into the world of golf.

"We have several developers who have spent $300,000 to $400,000 on engineering and environmental studies and are not even close to breaking ground," Clark said. "In a lot of instances you have to have very deep pockets. And it all gets reflected with the consumer, who is the golfer. A lot of these are public, daily-fee courses — things we need desperately. The counties and communities are in favor of the golf course, but still have to go through the arduous permitting process. In one case we have in Washington, D.C., seven different regulatory agencies were involved in just the irrigation pond."

Clark complained that after the federal government writes legislation or guidelines, states and counties add stricter laws. "It really discourages any development," he said. "This isn't universal," he said. "We're trying to identify certain areas around the country where you can get things done. It's getting tougher and tougher."

He specified the East and West coasts and New England as the regions with the toughest environmental laws, basically because so many regulations apply to specific areas.

Golf course builder Paul Clute of Hartland, Mich., agreed about the great differences between regions, specifying wetlands laws as the most daunting.

"Determination and enforcement varies dramatically geographically," Clute said.

Architect Steve Burns of Fernandina Beach, Fla., pointed to the recent Supreme Court ruling that local governments can draft more restrictive pesticide regulations than federal laws. "Hopefully, this won't lead to a lot of communities, with no technical know-

Continued on page 22

Major fix-up at Countryside CC

CLEARWATER, Fla. - Countryside Country Club has begun a $1.5 million renovation of its 27 holes.

Gary Player Design Group of Palm Beach Gardens is managing the redesign of the nine- hole Bayhead Course, originally built in 1980. Walden Golf Construction Co. of Odelmar, Fla., is responsible for the re- construction.

The Countryside project includes renovation of the fairways, irrigation systems on the Bayhead, Lake and Pine courses.

The overhaul is the final phase of a $5.5 million capital improvement campaign.

November 1991 21