

GC of Miami \$1M behind projections

MIAMI — The Golf Club of Miami, three years ago expected to provide plenty of "scratch" to Dade County, instead has become a high handicap to Dade taxpayers.

Metro has spent more than \$24 million on the Northwest Dade complex, but revenues at one of the nation's first joint public-private luxury golf facilities are \$1 million behind projections.

Blame is being centered on bad decisions by the county and the PGA Tour, which manages the club. A harsh financial climate has

plagued the facility which includes two 18-hole championship courses and a nearby 18-hole, par three layout.

Mayor Steve Clark may have been prophetic in 1989 when he told colleagues they would "rue the day" they voted for the PGA Tour contract.

It was anticipated that Metro would earn \$820,000 by the end of 1991.

Instead, Metro has made no money, plans for an on-site hotel were scrapped, and Metro must pay the PGA Tour about \$140,000 in

management fees.

All this is a far cry from early promise. Robert Trent Jones designed two courses there in the early 1960s, Arnold Palmer once represented the course, and Jackie Gleason was a regular.

General manager Paul O'Dell sees improvements. He said the marketing budget has been increased by one-third, sand traps were redone recently on the longer West Course, and similar work on the East Course will be completed in 1992.

Lou Holtz a founding member of Legends at Chateau Elan

BRASELTON, Ga. — Notre Dame football coach Lou Holtz, who paces the equivalent of 18 holes of golf during an intense Saturday afternoon, soon may be getting his exercise on the links.

He is the first founding member of the Legends at Chateau Elan, the latest exclusive golf resort in north Georgia.

The Braselton club hopes Holtz will head a number of high-profile personalities who will boost membership.

The Legends is being designed by Gene Sarazen, Sam Snead and Kathy Whitworth, along with course architect Dennis Griffiths.

The course is the concept of Chateau Elan founder and Chief Executive Officer Donald Panoz.

The pharmaceutical magnate plans three golf courses on the 2,400-acre site 30 miles north of Atlanta.

The first course, opened in 1989, is the state's top-ranked public course.

Construction of the third course is scheduled to begin next summer.

Inability to buy land puts snag in Ala. plans

PEEKS HILL, Ala. — The Retirement Systems of Alabama aims to build golf course across the state to draw tourists and spur economic development, but one of its big drives has found a giant sand trap.

Donald F. Gibbs, owner of 800 choice acres in northern Calhoun County eyed as a championship golf complex site, said the deal died when area property owners either refused to sell him their land or asked much more than their acreage is worth.

Gibbs said he needed to acquire about 300 acres to give him the 1,000 acres necessary for him to donate the golf course land. He said he needed 650 acres left over to make the project economically feasible.

RSA will build the \$8-million complex — 27 holes and a nine-hole par-3 — only if Gibbs donates about 450 acres.

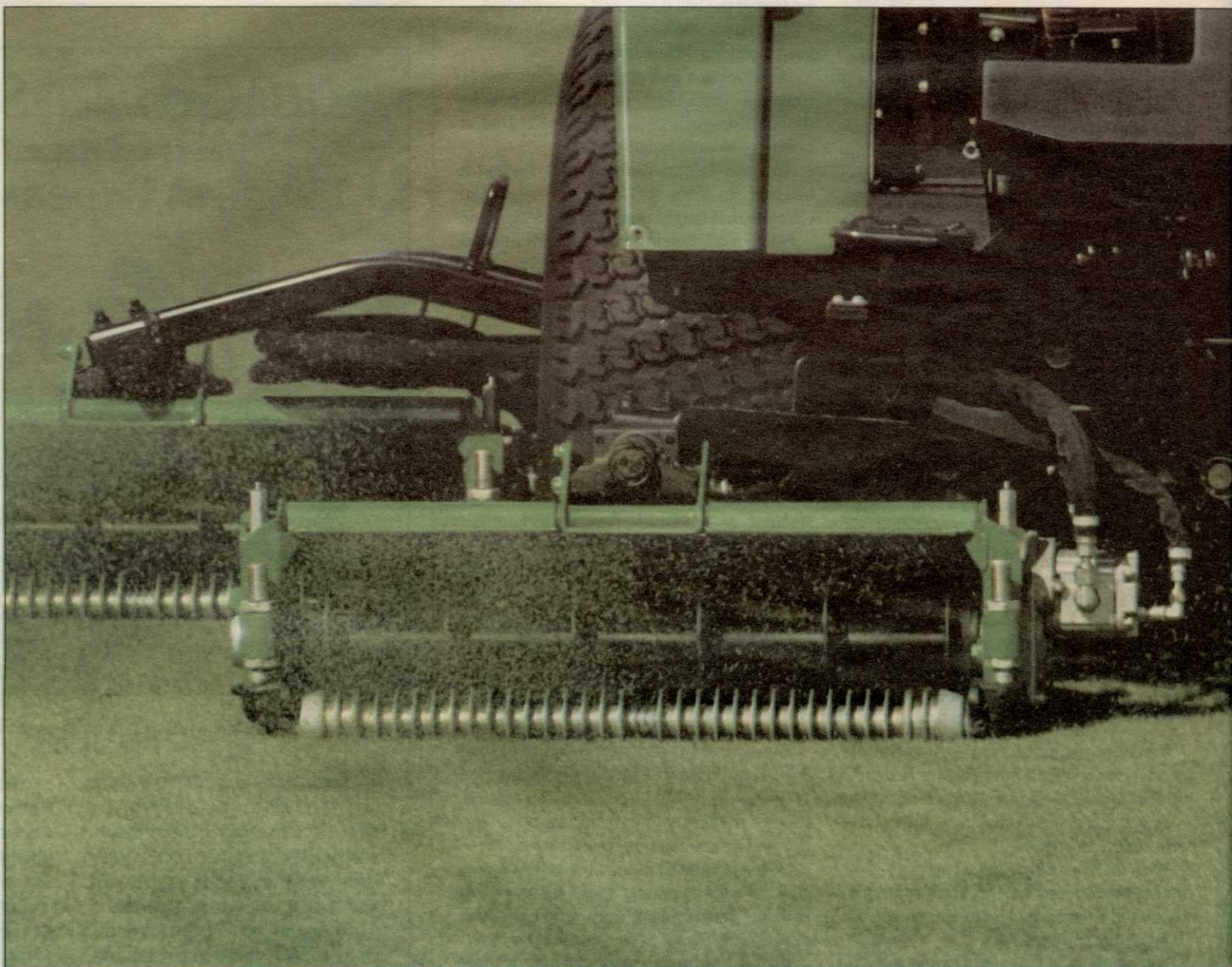
David Bronner, RSA executive director, held out hope that another acceptable site could be found in the same area. The RSA is building golf courses in Mobile, Auburn/Opelika, Birmingham, Huntsville, Greenville and Dothan, and has been looking at sites in the Anniston/Gadsden and Tuscaloosa areas.

City to purchase, improve course

COUNTRYSIDE, Ill. — Imminent purchase of the Maple Crest Golf Course by this city and the Pleasant Dale Park District will be followed by course closing for a year. This will permit an estimated \$1.7 million in improvements.

Owner Virginia Burket's selling price is \$5.8 million. In 1990, Countryside and Pleasant Dale voters passed a referendum to buy the golf course to preserve the open space.

Renovations may include a new 35-station driving range with lights, a new 3,500-square foot clubhouse with a pro shop, a freshly-landscaped nine-hole course (reduced from the present 12 holes), a new irrigation system, and parking for from 75 to 100 cars.



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