Best Maintained Course on the Senior PGA Tour

The pros go with Cochise

By HAL PHILLIPS

SCOTTSDALE, Ariz. — Virgil Robinson knows a little something about preparing a golf course for finicky players. He's currently director of agronomy and maintenance at Desert Mountain, whose Cochise Course annually plays host to the Senior PGA Tour event, The Tradition. In a poll conducted by Golf Course News, Cochise was chosen by Tour players as the best maintained course on the senior circuit.

However, Robinson came to Desert Mountain from the Burning Tree Club, known around the Washington, D.C. area as the Golf Course of Presidents. He matriculated to Burning Tree from the 36-hole facility at Andrews Air Force Base, where military types walked the course as they might conduct

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Best Developer of Golf Communities

Nation's architects and builders choose Arvida

By KENT R. DAVIES

Industry leadership was key in determining the nation's Best Developer of Communities, as voted by architects and builders in an exclusive Golf Course News poll.

Competition was fierce, but Arvida of Boca Raton, Fla. came out on top of the 24 developers which received votes. Multiple votes were also garnered by Branigar Organization; J.H. Chaffin & Jim Light; Greenwood Development Corporation; Don Nice-wonder; Bob Hardy and Crescent Resources.

Arvida garnered peer commendation for being a "great benefactor of golf," according to Gary Linn — vice president at Robert Trent Jones II International — who worked on Arvida's Weston Hills Country Club project in Fort Lauderdale. Linn stressed Arvida's industry leadership in making "golf always an integral part of their communities. They've allowed their golf courses to start becoming golf courses again.

"Arvida's courses are a statement for the whole community aside from those lots fronting the golf course," Linn continued. "When you first drive into Weston Hills, for instance, there's a big, open landscape of golf and water with the houses set way back. You come up to and enter the club without seeing a house. The housing is around as you play the course, but it isn't like driving past garages and driveways like you see in many developments."

Weston was one of the first developments with double fairways,

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When it comes to covering a lot of ground, the competition isn't the only thing

Golf Course News proudly presents its design, construction and maintenance awards for 1992.
Robinson & Co. chosen by Seniors

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a barracks inspection.

"I'd say the general's were the
hardest to please, much harder
than the senior pros," said
Robinson. "You wouldn’t believe
some of the stuff we had to do for
those guys. They made us go out
on Saturday mornings and wipe
off the benches so they wouldn’t
get their pants wet."

Robinson would be gratified by
the survey responses of Senior
Tour players, who chose the Jack
Nicklaus-designed Desert Moun-
tain over the second-place win-
er, The Vintage Club. Bruce
Crampton, for example, praised
Cochise by saying "It is a treat to
be able to play a golf course as
well conditioned as this." Jim
Ferree added that Desert Moun-
tain routinely sports "perfect
greens and fairways."

Robinson oversees all the main-
tenance at Desert Mountain’s
three courses: Cochise, Geronimo
and Renegade. Each track has its
own superintendent, who answers
to Robinson. Ron Ruppert was
superintendent at Cochise for the
1995 tourney, but has since moved
ton to another Nicklaus project
underway in Santa Fe, N.M. Scott
Kroft has taken his place.

"We are well blessed with a
great staff, 60 percent of which is
Hispanic," said Robinson. "These
people really take maintenance to
heart. They take care of it like it
was their own lawn."

The staff at Cochise gears the
maintenance schedule around the
tournament date, which falls an-
ually near the end of March or
case in April. Unlike many South-
western tour sites, which must
jump-start the growing process to
accommodate mid-January tour-
neys, Cochise is fortunate in the
calendar department.

"We’re coming out of the non-
growth period after the 1st of
March, which is good for our
ryegrass overseeding," Robinson
explained. "In the turf areas, bent
and rye are the easiest to main-
tain during that time of year.

"Our basic concern — in fact,
our biggest fear — is getting a
heavy rainstorm because it can
destroy the DC [decomposed
granite] areas."

The DC areas at Cochise are
essentially desert, waste/transi-
tion zones used for drainage. It’s
important to keep the drainage in
prime condition all year around,
said Robinson, because you never
know when a heavy downpour
might occur.

"We really rely on the DC areas
for water run-off," he said. "Usu-
ally, at that time of the year, we
have a pretty major rainstorm
within two weeks of the tourna-
ment. Hopefully it happens early
and you can recover."

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Word is spreading
almost as fast
as our bentgrasses.

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Mr. K. Harada, Greenskeeper
Yamaotka Country Club
Gifu, Japan

David Fleming, Project Manager
Mt. Woodson Country Club
Ramona, California

Lanai City, Hawaii

"The Experience at Koele"

Bob Adler, Dir. of Golf Course Operations
Mt. Woodson Country Club
Denver, Colorado

Ian Grimes, Golf Course Superintendent
Coodaongra Tweed Heads Golf Course
Queensland, Australia

David A. Hein, Golf Course Superintendent
Seasons Ridge Golf Course, Eldon, Missouri

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BENTGRASS