NEWS IN BRIEF

BUCK LAKE, Miss. — An 18-hole golf course will accompany first-phase construction of a $700 million casino resort here in north Tunica County, about 18 miles south of Memphis, Tenn. With its favorable ruling on behalf of BL America — the Mississippi Gaming golf course will accompany first-phase construction of a $700 million casino resort here in north Tunica County, by Grand Casinos and Gaming Corp. of Development Co.— a firm jointly owned 3,300 slot machines, 150 table games and two hotels totaling 900 rooms. • • • Commission has cleared the way for mid-August. Architect Keith Foster is municipal course here should be ready by referendum is scheduled for November the regulation-length layout could be- a bond issue to finance the course. If the referendum is approved, construction of the regulation-length layout could begin next spring. The Benson Corp., an Englewood, Colo.-based golf-advocacy firm, is assisting the city with the project. • • • PIERRE, S.D. — Construction is underway on the Dunes Golf Complex near Fort Pierre. The facility includes a nine-hole executive course, driving range, clubhouse and housing development along the Missouri River. The range should open in the spring and the course by early summer. Developer Tipp Hamilton designed the course.

SOUTHPHAMTON, N.Y. — Developer Robert Rubin plans to build two 18-hole golf courses and an unspecified number of homes on 521 acres overlooking Peconic Bay. Rees Jones will design the two layouts, one public and one private. Construction could begin as early as next spring. The site is home to an automobile racetrack. Rubin bought the property at an auction two years ago. He had planned to continue it as a race-track, but ran into significant opposition.

EXPLOSIVE BACKDROP?
Mount St. Helens, the dormant volcano that blew its top in 1980, provides the backdrop for Washington state's newest golf facility, Tri-Mountain Golf Course, named for its clear-day vistas of mount St. Helens, Hood and Adams. This William G. Robinson design, located in the southern Washington town of Ridgefield, opened for play July 1.

TEEN FELLED BY ON-COURSE TEMPER TANTRUM
GLOVERSVILLE, N.Y. — A teenager who slammed his golf club against a bench in frustration over a bad shot was killed when the three-wood's sharp, broken shaft snapped back and pierced his heart. Jeremy Brennan, 16, was playing golf with friends at Kingsboro Golf Club here on Saturday, July 9, when he struck the bench near the sixth tee. The broken club shaft struck him in the chest and the youth was pronounced dead at an area hospital three hours later, according to the Fulton County Sheriff's office.

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Georgia flood waters ravage area courses

Macon, Albany regions hardest hit

AUBURN, Ga. — Golf courses along the Flint and Ocmulgee rivers suffered damage ranging from extensive to minor from the 500-year flood that ravaged southern Georgia in early July. Those bordering the Flint, particularly near Albany in southwestern Georgia, were hit particularly hard, with several courses still underwater a week after the worst of the flooding occurred. Water lapped at the roof and the tops of at least two flagsticks at Radium Country Club, according to Darren Garner, assistant pro at Double Gate Country Club, located on higher ground 20 miles from Radium. Calls to the Radium course and course officials had not been returned by press time. An employee at the city recreation department said the staff had been unable to evaluate damage at Turner Field Municipal Golf Course because high water made it impossible to reach the facility.

Calls to the American Legion Golf Course and various Legion posts were not answered. Garner reported that large parts of that facility were also underwater. Courses along the Ocmulgee in the central part of the state fared better and should bounce back with little permanent turf damage, according to United States Golf Association Green Section agronomist Pat O'Brien.

"The big problem is cleaning the mud left on the turf when the creeks rise," said Pat O'Brien, director of the USGA's Southeast region. "Most courses will hose the mud off and be back in business. That is mud. Muddagrass will grow back, especially when we start getting some of those 90-degree days in a month or so." Six of the 27 holes at The Landing's Golf Club in Warner Robins were underwater for several days. Waist-high water covered holes 3 through 7 on the new Creek 9 while the entire 4th hole on the Tresse 9 suffered a similar fate.

"It looked like the Ocmulgee River out there," said maintenance worker Jeff Shaw, comparing the flooded fairways to the river that...
SUPPLIER BUSINESS

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Phillips commentary

an EIS. In fact, never has a course been subject to the lesser scrutiny of an Environmental Assessment Worksheet, or EAW. The state DNR felt left out, its feelings hurt.

In turn, the county feels singled out, over-scrutinized and insulted. Herein lies the dispute. It has nothing to do with the potentially endangered barren strawberry, which may or may not be present on the site. It has everything to do with government weenies protecting their turf, to the chagrin of architect Jeff Brauer and Minnesota taxpayers, who must foot the bill for adjudication.

In this case, the Minnesota Environmental Quality Board ruled the DNR did not have jurisdiction over the St. Louis County approval process. Case closed? Nope... Sometimes, when weenies have their hackles up, one adjudication is not enough.

Only a few days after the DNR lost its argument, a citizens group—armed with many of the trumped-up arguments no longer useful to DNR—sued the state in an effort to stop the golf project. In fact, according to Minnesota's deputy attorney general, several DNR employees have joined the citizens group.

Apparently, these particular weenies don't know when to quit. It's easy to get discouraged when a conscientious, quality project like Giants Ridge can be stymied by a bunch of hyper-sensitive DNR engineers who—had their turf not been infringed upon—might instead be fumbling around their St. Paul offices, obsessing over their new pocket protectors or the office shortage of four-color pens.

Developers may see the Giants Ridge debacle and swear off golf courses opened in 1993—and those somebodies are making a killing.

Submitted for your approval: If a third party had approached the Minnesota DNR early in the process and briefed the weenies on plans for Giants Ridge, would the course be under construction today? Who knows? Who cares? Sometimes stripping a particular politician or agency isn't enough. Sometimes you, the developer, must bring plans to the table. Remember that politics and, more specifically, politicians can be truly annoying, but they're here to stay.

There's a myth that politicians are elected to solve our problems. More often than not, we must solve theirs.

Georgia flooding

Continued from page 3

runs through Warner Robins. "A lot of silt and debris washed up on the course from the creeks. But we only closed for three days. The 18th closed for a week. Several traps washed out and are in need of repair. Otherwise, the only major damage was a downed tree on the 9th hole," Trenaman said. "It was in a strategic location about 150 yards out, making it difficult to get to the green in two. Otherwise, we were pretty fortunate."

Thirteen inches of rain fell on Riverside Country Club in Macon over a three-day period, according to head mechanic Rob Copley. Sitting astride but high above the Ocmulgee, the course to escape damage from the flood-swollen river. But rising water levels in the creeks meandering through the course turned a low plateau area on the 11th hole into a sandbar while washing out one side of a 30-foot bridge.

At Houston Lake CC 30 miles south of Macon, an earthen dam holding back a 200-acre lake gave way, draining the course's main water supply.

"It was also the course's main feature," O'Brien said. "It was fresh water, so the course wasn't damaged. But it's going to cost them a lot to repair it. And they're going to be without water for awhile."

Superintendent Scott Palmer said no one has estimated the cost of rebuilding the dam or whether it will be possible to obtain the building permits to rebuild it. Meanwhile, he plans to dig a well for water.

"We got something like 12 inches of rain in 16 hours. We were lucky it wasn't worse," he said.

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