First and Foremost

Collier's breaks new ground with Audubon

By MARK LESLIE

ORTH NAPLES, Fla. — Collier’s Reserve Country Club has become the first Audubon Signature Sanctuary in the country, setting the pace for this offshoot of the New York Audubon Wildlife Sanctuary Program. To qualify for the Signature Sanctuary designation, a development must get the Audubon involved before construction. Developers sign a contract, agreeing to adopt environmental guidelines for construction and to adhere to certain standards afterward, such as minimums for water and electricity use, garbage, and impact on the site’s ecology.

While another seven projects are under construction under the Signature Sanctuary program, Collier’s superintendent Tim Hiers said: “It’s a little scary being first. Everybody will see what we’ve done, so they have a launching pad. And, because we’re first, we’re going to be watched closely by superintendents, developers, Ron [Dodson, president of New York Audubon], and other environmentalists who will be looking for holes in the program.”

Saying that six of the 50 to 60 developers that have inquired about the program have joined, Dodson expects that “getting one or two open will increase the amount of participation.”

In various stages of development under the Signature Sanctuary program are Sonnensfeld in Stuart, Fla.; Greens-of-Poets in Delaware; Boulder Ridge in San Jose, Calif.; Ocean Trails in Los Angeles; Pine Ridge in Baltimore; Granite Bay near Sacramento, Calif.; and Grand Island Golf Club near Albany, Ga.

“People are concerned we are going to dictate architecture or landscaping, but the program is not designed to do this,” Dodson said. “We’re going to look for those things that are the foundation of the Audubon program. We’re not going to tell you how to build your house.”

Promoting the idea of Signature Sanctuaries, Dodson pointed out, is the New York Audubon Sanctuary Program, some 4,000 acres of land in the metropolitan area of New York City.

The Arthur Hills-designed Collier’s Reserve Country Club set the pace for the New York Audubon’s Signature Sanctuary program.

TGIF proves it can make it on its own

By MARK LESLIE

EAST LANSING, Mich. — Turfgrass Information Foundation (TGIF) membership has doubled and participation has grown 30 percent since the mandate for its self-sufficiency was handed down last winter by the U.S. Golf Association Green Section.

“I’m very, very optimistic. These are the right kinds of numbers. That’s the kind of response, and interest we needed from the industry,” said Peter Cookingham, director of the Turfgrass Information Center, based hereat Michigan State University. The USGA had underwritten the costs since the start-up of TGIF, the world’s largest turfgrass-related library.

Now, Cookingham said, “It’s a matter of sustaining that momentum, and of delivering the good students

By MARK LESLIE

There’s a gold rush going on in the golf industry — and the gold is good turfgrass superintendents position their golf courses to attract the best students available. Superintendents anxious to get turf-wise employees are eyeing improved housing.

It’s [new housing] happening, and more and more people are thinking about it,” said Bob Brame, agronomist with the U.S. Golf Association (USGA) Green Section’s Mid-Atlantic Section. “If you’re looking at getting students from any distance, you almost have to have housing.”

To get good employees, especially college students, on a golf course is pretty tough nowadays,” said Dr. Michael Kenney, director of research for the Green Section. “Turf students are required to do an internship. But they try to find a job where they won’t go broke paying for housing and be left with no money to pay next fall’s college bills.”

Of the facilities that offer housing to employees, Greenwich (Conn.) Country Club boasts the Mother of All Dormitories.

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While Greenwich Country Club might have the ultimate facility, others have taken the housing plunge, too, and seriously.

His apartment complex “simplifies the whole process,” said Bruce Cadenell, superintendent at Caves Valley Golf Course in Finksburg, Md.

Cadenell typically sends letters to a half-dozen turfgrass programs from Nov. 15-Dec. 15, and “by Christmas-time I’m