Gotham City golf industry gets new face

By MARK LESLIE

NEW YORK CITY — New York City is reclaiming its Manhattan waterfront and golf has a hand in it. The natural feel of a golf course will be blended with a high-tech delivery system in a major project that will bring a four-deck golf range to a Hudson River pier.

"We're taking an urban concept you'd find in Japan and importing it to New York—the difference being, instead of a smaller parcel of land, our parcel happens to be a pier and one that is structurally quite substantial," said Steve diCostanzo, a consultant on the Chelsea Piers project.

Construction will begin in late spring on the Chelsea Piers Golf Course.

Florida Public Television tunes in: How to construct a golf course

By MARK LESLIE

BONITA SPRINGS, Fla. — With golf development booming all around it and the golf industry bringing billions of dollars a year into the state, the southwest Florida public television station is broadcasting a 13-part documentary, How To Build a Golf Course.

"Golf is a large component of the construction and real-estate business in southwest Florida. Most real-estate developments are using golf courses as a prime marketing tool," said Kirk Lehman, station manager at WSFPTV, who will offer the series nationwide this summer. "Within a 10-mile radius of our station, at least six or seven 18-hole championship courses are under construction."

In the first segment an environmental consultant walks the audience over the course, pointing out wildlife that will have to be protected and enhanced. In another show, Wadsworth Golf Construction Co., Inc. is featured.

Churchill Golf & Country Club recently set the record with a major expansion of a 16,000-square-foot clubhouse. The $20 million project was completed in a record 14 months.

Robert C. 'Bob'by Weed, 38, has been the PGA Tour's chief designer since 1987. Prior to that, he was superintendent of TPC at Sawgrass and construction consultant for TPC projects. Working out of the Tour's Ponte Vedra, Fla., office, Weed has been recalled to numerous TPC course designs. A South Carolina native, he apprenticed with Pete and Alice Dye and was involved with such widely known Dye designs as Harbour Town and Long Cove in Hilton Head, S.C., TPC at Sawgrass in Ponte Vedra, and Amelia Island (Fla.) Plantation.

Golf Course News: You believe you may be the only member of the American Society of Golf Course Architects who is also a certified Golf Course Superintendent. How has that helped your design career?

'Bobby Weed: I know from my agronomic background what a superintendent has to live with and maintain. When I'm designing fairways, sometimes I imagine I'm on a mower. Knowing how something will have to be maintained can give you an edge. Labor is 60 to 70 percent of your maintenance budget. Maintenance people are tuning into that in the design phase. If you address it then, it dominoes through to the superintendent's budget and ultimately the fee charged the consumer, who is really paying for all this, anyway.'

GCN: How early do you like to bring in construction?

Continued on page 43
Call him ‘Colonel, sir’

Hurdzan will retire outranking some, but not Arnold

Dr. Michael Hurdzan is a golf course architect most of the time, but for a few days each month, he is Colonel Hurdzan, commander of an Army Reserve unit. Recently he received one of the Army’s highest peacetime honors, the Legion of Merit Medal, from Maj. Gen. Donald Campbell, commander of the U.S. Army Civil Affairs and Psychological Operations Command, Fort Bragg, N.C. Hurdzan was decorated for superior leadership and dedication as retiring commander of the 2nd Psychological Operations Group, one of the largest units in the Army Special Operations Force.

Hurdzan’s basic branch is Special Forces, more commonly called “green berets,” but he is also qualified in psychological operations, civil affairs, infantry and chemical warfare. He is an experienced military parachutist, has earned the expert infantry badge, as well as foreign airborne qualifications from the British and German military forces.

Col. Hurdzan is planning to retire within a few months. “Many people are encouraging me to stay longer to make the rank of general,” he said, “but I now outrank Alister MacKenzie and Hugh Allison, who were majors, and Pete Dye, who was a sergeant. Besides, golf already has one fine general, (in name only) Arnold Palmer.”

Chelsea Piers a facelift

Continued from page 41

Range on Pier 59 and it should open in the spring or summer of 1994, according to diCostanzo, executive director of the Golf Range and Recreation Association of America.

The range is part of the $50 million Chelsea Piers Sports and Entertainment Complex in which Piers 59 to 62, between 17th and 22nd streets, will be renovated.

Then-Mayor David N. Dinkins called it “the major step linking our neighborhoods and our waterfront as contemplated by the Hudson River Park Conservancy and New York City’s Comprehensive Waterfront Plan.”

After two years of planning, Chelsea Piers Management, Inc., secured a 10-year lease with 10-year renewable option on the four piers from New York State, which owns them.

The Hudson River Park Conservancy wants a park from the battery to 59th street.

Officials felt this was compatible with Chelsea Piers’ plans, which include the range on one pier, a health and fitness center called the Summer Games Training Facility on the enclosed Pier 60, two Olympic-sized skating rings on another enclosed pier, and possible an outdoor rollerskating ring on the fourth, said spokeswoman Betsy Haggerty. The first skating ring should open by next Christmas and all four piers should be complete by the end of 1995, she said.

... From 52 heated teeing stations, the 60-by-225-yard driving range will “evolve the feelings” of three famous greens — the 11th at St. Andrews’ Old Course, TPC Sawgrass’s island green and Pebble Beach’s 18th, diCostanzo said.

The Hudson River and a waste area on the left will create the feel of Pebble’s finale; railroad ties and foot-deep water around the green will simulate Sawgrass’s 17th; and the bunker complex fronting St. Andrews’ green will add to the illusion.

Artificial turfgrass will be on the contoured landing areas and slightly elevated, pitched greens. Video cameras at hitting stalls will provide instant replay of golf swings.

All this will blend with an automatic tee-up delivery system imported from Japan’s Sunaga Kaihatsu, a leader in the field. Balls will be picked up randomly at low points on the fairway and brought to the retrieval system, which will return the golf balls in water troughs and into a conveyor network that will deliver the balls to each level and then to each tee.

“The tee-up accepts a debit card so there is good cash control,” diCostanzo said, adding that per-hour costs will range from $15 to $25, depending on the time of day.

Make us part of your hole maintenance program.

From greens aeration to fairway aeration to core cleanup, nobody covers more ground.

Cushman® GA™ 60 — Aerate a wide range of turf conditions on fairways, tees and greens at the rate of up to 1.1 acres per hour.

Ryan® GA™ 30 — Ryan pioneered variable hole spacing six years ago with the GA 30. Designed for greens, fairways and tees.

Ryan Greensaire® 24 — Developed for greens and other fine turf areas, it delivers 110,000 more holes on 10,000 square feet than the competition, making it the ultimate in greens aeration.