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The Public Arena
Virginia Beach hopes to mimic the success of Pinehurst and nearby Williamsburg

PLAYERS SURVEYED ON SUPER’S ROLE
Image enhanced but golfers insist on ‘green’ look
By PETER BLAIS
ORLANDO, Fla. — Most golfers view superintendents as trained professionals and the person most responsible for course conditions — news course managers should find encouraging considering national efforts to elevate their image.
Disturbingly, however, few golfers recognized the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America (GCSAA) as the superintendents’ national organization. Also troubling was the unwillingness of most golfers to accept poorer playing conditions in exchange for reduced chemical and water use on their courses.
According to a recent survey of golfers conducted by the National Golf Foundation

STUDY SHOWS:
Name designers pull higher dues and green fees
By PETER BLAIS
HARRISBURG, Pa. — Private courses designed by signature architects command higher initiation fees and monthly dues while signature architect-designed daily-fee facilities charge higher green fees, according to a preliminary review of a study performed by a Pennsylvania course appraiser and a graduate business student.
The point of the study is to eventually help developers determine the potential benefit of hiring or not hiring a signature architect in specific markets, and perhaps the difference in hiring one signature architect in place of another.

COURSE MAINTENANCE
Sprinkler uniformity sought but not found
New Chemistry: biologicals & nematodes
Putting green research: Top 10 projects

COURSE DEVELOPMENT
Morris rh in family-accessible design
What’s doing in Asia-Pacific? Tons
Elkington eyes niche in landscape/design

COURSE MANAGEMENT
Meadowbrook stock offering aids expansion
ClubLink dominates private Toronto market
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SUPPLIER BUSINESS
The Scotts Co. undergoes turnover at the top
Kirtland buys Best Sand; FMI, Cactus merge
State EPA’s sign off on ProStar, Tupersan

Ciba-Sandoz deal creates new firm: Novartis
By HAL PHILLIPS
Consolidation in the chemical trade continues apace, as Des Plaines, Ill-based Sandoz Agro and Greensboro, N.C.-based Ciba — both divisions of enormous Swiss-owned pharmaceutical and life sciences conglomerates — have agreed to join forces, creating a $6 billion agrichemical giant.
The new entity will be known as Novartis, providing Bill Liles, head of Turf & Ornamental for Ciba, his fourth corporate identity in a decade. First it was Geigy. Then came Ciba-Geigy, fol-
Continued on page 3

Griffiths, Brauer face off on course costs
By MARK LESLIE
Worried the cost of golf is starting to drive people from the game, the incoming and outgoing presidents of the American Society of Golf Course Architects have presented arguments that would lead developers to make harsh choices about their projects.
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SENSITIVE STROKES
Architect Ron Garl worked sensitively around wetlands at the newly opened Indian River Club. Located in Vero Beach, Fla., Indian River is only the third course in the world to be granted Audubon Signature status. The course also embodies the Environmental Principles for Golf Courses recently issued at the conference on Golf & the Environment (see page 16).
IN BRIEF...

SPRINGFIELD, Ill. — Citing a bloated local golf market and an unacceptable financial risk, a private consultant recently advised the Springfield Park Board not to buy The Rail Golf Course, home of the LPGA's State Farm Rail Classic for many years. As a result, the 18-hole course is expected to go back to the open market. Leonard Sapp, the owner of the course who initially offered it to the city for $3 million in an act characterized as a gift, later lowered his price to $2 million. Still, the park board voted down the idea. Sapp is expected to go forward with his plan to sell the course but will open it for play this year.

PORTSMOUTH, R.I. — It looks like plans to build an 18-hole, professional-caliber golf course in Portsmouth may be history. Town council members recently opposed the idea at a meeting and a spokesman for the Senior Tour Players Development Inc. said he doubts the plan can get off the ground. The Boston-based company had proposed building an 18-hole layout on land at the town-owned Glen Farm park overlooking the Sakonnet River. The hope was that the course would attract a Senior PGA Tour event. PGA golfer Brad Faxon, who's from Barrington, R.I., was involved in designing a preliminary course plan.

MYRTLE BEACH, S.C. — Winyah Bay Golf Club, one of the first golf courses built in this rich golf mecca, has been revived by George Marlowe and his family. The nine-hole course had been closed for almost a year from 1994-95 and was on its way to ruin and disrepair. But Marlowe bought the course in July 1995 for $1.25 million. Winyah Bay reopened last October and there are now tentative plans to expand the course into a full, 18-hole layout. It's truly a family affair at Winyah Bay. George Marlowe's son, Wade, is the head golf professional. His younger son, Ross, is the course superintendent, and his wife, Amelia, works in the pro shop.

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UPGRADE AT PALMETTO

The Robert Trent Jones Course at Palmetto Dunes, one of the oldest courses on Hilton Head Island, S.C., has reopened after an extensive renovation. While golfers won't notice much of a difference cosmetically in the course, Director of Golf Chip Pellerin of Greenwood Development Corp. said the cornerstone of the renovation is a wall-to-wall, computerized, state-of-the-art irrigation system covering the layout from tee to green. Four tee boxes were expanded, and irrigation was added to the par-3 10th hole, and the locker rooms were refurbished as well. Over the past two years, Director of Golf Maintenance John Belts has supervised renovations at the George Fazio and Arthur Hills courses at Palmetto Dunes.

Signature design

Continued from page 1

"But what people should realize," Hirsh said, "is that this information must be used in conjunction with a site-specific study that looks at the appraisal issues peculiar to that area." In other words, while hiring a particular signature architect may be economically worthwhile in one area it may not be in another locale. Hirsh and MBA student James Owen surveyed golf markets in Austin, Texas, Hilton Head Island, S.C., Chicago and Palm Springs, Calif. The signature architects identified in the study were Jack Nicklaus, Arnold Palmer, Pete Dye, Tom Fazio, Arthur Hills, Robert Trent Jones, Robert Trent Jones II and Rees Jones. A brief summary shows that:

- Initiation/equity fees at private clubs designed by signature architects ranged from 44 to 112 percent higher than non-signature competition.
- Monthly dues ranged from 23 to 111 percent higher than non-signature facilities.
- Annual play at private, non-signature courses was generally higher than signature facilities, except on Hilton Head. And no trend was apparent in the number of rounds played between signature and non-signature daily-fee operations.
- Aside from the higher fees generally charged by signature architects, Hirsh said, "in the four markets we've studied, there seems to be a benefit to hiring a signature architect." GPA and Owen are still analyzing the data to hopefully measure the added value (if any) of engaging a signature architect. Other issues they hope to analyze will include the effect of signature architects on surrounding development prices and absorption, and the long-term effect of the signature architect to the financial bottom line of the property.

Larry Hirsh