

Pioneers of public-access

We pay a great deal of attention to the public-access golf course market in the pages of this publication. Indeed, *Golf Course News* coined the phrase "public access" so we wouldn't have to say "daily-fee, municipal, semi-private and resort" every time we referred to the largest portion of this country's 15,000-plus golf facilities.

Five years ago when the boom in public-access development was not yet evident, *Golf Course News* decided to create an educational forum for the owners, superintendents and developers of these facilities. Why? Because even then, back in 1990, while public-access courses accounted for half the nation's golf course stock, there was no conference and trade show that served this vibrant market sector.

That was five years ago.

During the ensuing five years more than 2,000 golf courses have opened nationwide — a full 80 percent of them public-access. Today daily-fee, municipal, semi-private and resort facilities account for more than two-thirds of American golf courses. Ninety percent of those courses now under construction are slated to be public access, so don't expect the trend to change anytime soon.

With the fifth Public Golf Forum scheduled for October 27-29, in Chicago, I want to take time here to salute all those golf industry professionals who've spoken at the Forum over the years. They saw the market changing and made it their business to prepare their golf industry colleagues for the unique challenges that lay ahead. Special thanks go to our keynote speakers: the inimitable Arnold Palmer, architect Robert Trent Jones Jr., Pete, Alice, Perry and P.B. Dye, and ClubCorp Chairman Robert Dedman.

Add to that prestigious list golfer, designer and certified character Peter Jacobsen who will keynote The 1996 Public Golf Forum this October (see story page 1).

Of course, speakers and keynoters who've participated in the Public Golf Forum aren't fools. They recognize that public-access is the wave of the future — "where the action is," so to speak. And who can blame them for wanting to align themselves with the fastest-growing portion of the golf industry? Who can blame them for taking advantage of an opportunity to



Hal Phillips,
editor

New faces, fewer fences?

Purged leadership and mended fences. It's fascinating how the two so often play out in concert. A case in point affecting the golf industry is the National Audubon Society's hiring of President John Flicker to replace Peter A.A. Berle, and the ensuing warming relationship with Audubon International (AI) and its Audubon Society of New York State branch.

The two associations have been in a heated battle for several years — ever since AI created the Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary Program and began working with nature's perceived "enemy" — golf courses. Ever since, NAS has vocally and venomously — not to mention wrongly — blasted AI as a rogue group.

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Mark Leslie,
managing editor

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Letters

OLYMPIC CLUB PRESIDENT RESPONDS

To the editor:

I am writing to clarify your article, "Two new holes approved at Olympic Club" in the June 1996 issue of *Golf Course News*.

It is the standard practice of the California Coastal Commission to include a non-discrimination clause in all Coastal Commission permits issued to private clubs. In fact, there was no discussion on this issue by the Coastal Commission or its staff at the hearing. The Olympic Club has advised the Coastal Commission that the non-discrimination clause is acceptable because it simply reaffirms the club's existing policy on non-discrimination. Any suggestion to the contrary in your article is regrettable.

I trust that you will print this letter in a prominent position in your July edition in order to set the record straight.

Dennis F. Moriarty
President
The Olympic Club
San Francisco

Ed. — The above letter was received after deadline for the July edition, which explains why it appears this month. According to Bob Merrill, chief of permitting for the California Coastal

Commission's (CCC) North Coast office in San Francisco, the CCC considers all private golf clubs "visitor service facilities," i.e. facilities that do allow public use of coastal lands. However, in exchange for permitting, the CCC often insists that private clubs promise — by including language in or rewriting their bylaws — not to discriminate on the basis of race or gender, said Merrill. While there is precedence for the CCC to insist on this non-discriminatory language when issuing permits to private clubs, it is not "standard practice," as Mr. Moriarty claims. Indeed, because the Olympic Club leases land from the City of San Francisco, the club was enjoined by the city as recently as 1987 (prior to the U.S. Open) to remove gender-discrimination language from its bylaws. Prior to this year's permit approval, which allows construction of two new holes on a coastal parcel, the Olympic Club "did not have a policy that definitively stated that it's the policy of the club not to discriminate," Merrill explained. "The club eliminated gender-based language in 1987, so we asked that they include some more definitive language; we asked that they go a step further to say they wouldn't discriminate."

TELLING AN IRRIGATION STORY

To the editor:

We receive your *Golf Course News* on a regular basis and thoroughly enjoy the articles that you put in it. We are writing to you to inform you of a project that we completed last July that has been a great benefit to our course.

In 1993 we underwent an expansion program in which we added an additional nine holes to our already nine-hole course. We also added a driving range plus complete computerized irrigation. Our architect was Joel Goldstrand from Minneapolis. Our irrigation system was installed by Rainbird irrigation systems. We formally opened our addition on July 2, 1994, and are very proud of the results.

The consummation to this project did not happen until July 1995 when we hooked our irrigation system into the wastewater plant. We are now irrigating with effluent water. There were many months of testing, and permitting before we were approved for this. The water we receive has maintained a test of 90 to 95 percent pure water. We piped it into one of our six ponds, which are tied together with a tiling system. We then installed two

pumps in the most strategic pond from which we irrigate the entire course.

This was not only a money-saving program, as we were previously using city water for irrigation, but we have found that our grass has a better root system and is more lush from the effluent water. We have also noticed that it takes less water to obtain the same results. We are presently the only golf course in the state of Minnesota using this type of irrigation. At this time, we have not had any odor or scum problems with this water.

We are concerned about environment, and the conservation of our natural resources and we feel we have indicated this by going with this program.

Other courses being built might consider doing the same thing if it is feasible to them. We feel it is in their best interests to investigate the possibility.

John LaFramboise
Club Manager
Montgomery Golf &
Recreation Club
Montgomery, Minn.

Ed. — Thanks for the tip. A story on this extraordinary expansion appears on page 32 as part of our special report on irrigation and pumping stations.

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GOLF COURSE NEWS

Leslie: Audubons not so far apart

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Meanwhile, it's nice to see the NAS commit itself to science as "the foundation on which the rest

of its work must rest." In his comment in *Audubon* magazine's May-June issue, Flicker declared this position while noting the hiring of ornithologist Gill.

It's interesting that Flicker on the one hand claims the history of Audubon is as a leader in science, and on the other hand acknowledges: "Credibility in this area will bring us respect throughout the scientific community, enabling us to form partnerships with outside researchers such as our Audubon Associates. These experts will serve as unofficial advisers to the organization in their particu-

lar field."

Along this line, NAS started an Important Bird Areas Project and is expanding its bird-monitoring programs and the MAPS project (Monitoring Avian Productivity and Survivorship), Flicker added. NAS is "exploring a backyard-habitat initiative, one that will stress private ownership and the pride and responsibility that goes with it."

Sounds rather like the Clinton-GOP thing, doesn't it — where one person tries to usurp another's ideas?

Fact is, the New York Audubon has promoted its own Backyard

Program for quite some time, as have the National Wildlife Federation and others.

"The finest form of flattery is trying to do what we're doing," Dodson said. "National Audubon has 500,000 members. If they can get each to do something in their backyards to help migratory birds, I think that would be great."

AI hasn't pushed its Backyard Program, waiting instead for the right sponsor to come along. That happened with the Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary Program, which was adopted by the U.S. Golf Association, and

the Adopt-a-School Program, adopted by the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America.

Now, about that backyard program... Remember this, says Dodson: "Homeowners can use diazinon and yet golf course superintendents can't. But a backyard is a backyard. A golf course is a backyard. A farm is a backyard. What's the difference with National Audubon starting a backyard sanctuary program and what we're doing with our golf course program? They're endorsing what we're doing."

Continued on next page

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Pelican Bay undertakes greens work

DAYTONA BEACH, Fla. — Golfers will experience larger greens and more consistent putting surfaces when a \$260,000 greens improvement project at Pelican Bay Country Club's Members Course here is completed later this year.

The project, supervised by International Golf Management (IGM) of Lakeland, is slated for completion around Labor Day. All greens at the 18-hole course are being reconfigured and enlarged, and most bunkers and sandtraps are being changed, according to Jerry Broome, IGM's regional manager at Pelican Bay.

Broome said Pelican Bay's outstanding characteristics are its roominess and the "sense of

tranquility" golfers feel when they play either of the two courses.

A specialist in providing golf course maintenance services on a contract basis, IGM is also overseeing a \$700,000 golf course upgrade at The Palms, one of five courses it maintains at the sprawling Palm-Aire Spa and Resort in Pompano Beach.

Under this project, IGM is in charge of redesigning and rebuilding the 18-hole course's greens, bunkers, select tees and fairways, as well as major irrigation and drainage improvements. This is the first face-lift for the Robert von Hagge-designed course since it opened in 1959. Work was scheduled for completion by the end of July.

Leslie: Labs checking in none too early

Continued from previous page
always look for the green lining."

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How important is the accreditation for soil-testing laboratories? (See story, page 15) Mark Flock, Agriculture Division director for Brookside Laboratories, said: "The problem is, you have laboratories doing supposedly the same test, but with differences in the way they have it set up. You'd have a blender, or golf course builder get three different results [from tests sent to three labs] because the procedures were dif-

ferent. One lab was doing a percolation test by using a vacuum and sucking the water through. Another was letting it gravity-flow through. Both are valid scientific methods, but the interpretation might be dramatically different. One guy has 40 inches per hour and the other 10 inches, and they both say it's okay. Maybe they both were okay, but it was very confusing."

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Be forward-looking and stop bad-mouthing the research on biological-control agents. That's the message from forward-looking superintendent Dan Dinelli of North Shore Country Club in Glenview, Ill., a key contact in our page 1 story on biologicals.

"People tend to still term biologicals 'snake oil' — even somewhat in the scientific community," said Dinelli. "No one really debates what these organisms can do in the lab. But the big question is, can it work in the real world? To me, that's sad because we're finally at the point where we're making some breakthroughs. EcoSoil is one of them. Another is Gary Harman [of Cornell University] hybridizing *Trichoderma* to become a really aggressive strain over and above native strains... I have no interest in selling these products. But I have a big interest in hoping that this direction continues to be explored."

"We have a lot more to learn with these pioneers — [EcoSoil's] BioJect and *Trichoderma* — learning their shortcomings and how to use them. That's all in the growing pains, but why bad-mouth them and shoot that direction down? In the same breath, those scientists will give directions for treating seed [with endophytes], and that's been widely accepted now. It's accepted only because it's been around longer. Yet it is really biological control — and successful biological control."

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No, it was not new to the game of golf, though it might be for other sports. After disqualifying himself from the Greater Hartford Open for playing with an improperly stamped ball, Greg Norman was asked why he would do such a thing.

"Look," he said, "if you cheat once, you cheat not on yourself but on life. You have to get that message across. Kids might see that, and when they get themselves into that kind of situation in the future, maybe they'll say, 'Hey, remember what Greg Norman did.' And that's great."

"We need to honor [the game]," he added. "What I did, any other player would have done, or at least I hope they would. I think it's just bred down through the generations. We police our own game."

The entire industry can be proud of this type of reputation for honesty.

to stand on wheels.

