RICHLAND, Wash. — Sometimes it can be tough to keep golfers off a course, even when it’s supposed to be closed until summer 1997. City officials have been struggling to keep what they describe as “golf poachers” off the public 18-hole Sham- Na-Pum Golf Course, which officially closed March 4 and is set to undergo a complete overhaul. A new course is set to open at the site in summer 1997. Rabid golfers, however, have ignored locked gates and fences since the official closing March 4 and caused an estimated $5,000 worth of damage to surveying work on the course in preparation for a planned new course and an adjacent development.

The city has since posted “No Trespassing” signs around the course in preparation for the start of construction, scheduled to begin this spring. It is also threatening to enforce the maximum penalty for criminal trespassing on city property, which is one year in jail and a $5,000 fine.

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On March 4, however, construction officials closed a gate to the modest, no-frills course. But since then, golf poachers have torn down gates and fencing and pulled up survey stakes while continuing to play golf.

Guilty plea entered in course case

MEMPHIS, Tenn. — An 18-year-old man pleaded guilty to wounding a vending machine owner during a $20 robbery last year at the Davy Crockett Golf Course.

Derrick T. Alston pleaded guilty in Criminal Court as he was about to be tried for attempted first-degree murder, aggravated robbery and four counts of aggravated assault. He faces prison time of between 13 and 74 years. Alston, who had no prior criminal record, was scheduled to be sentenced by the end of April.

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