

# von Hagge takes progressive look to Spain, Italy

By MARK LESLIE

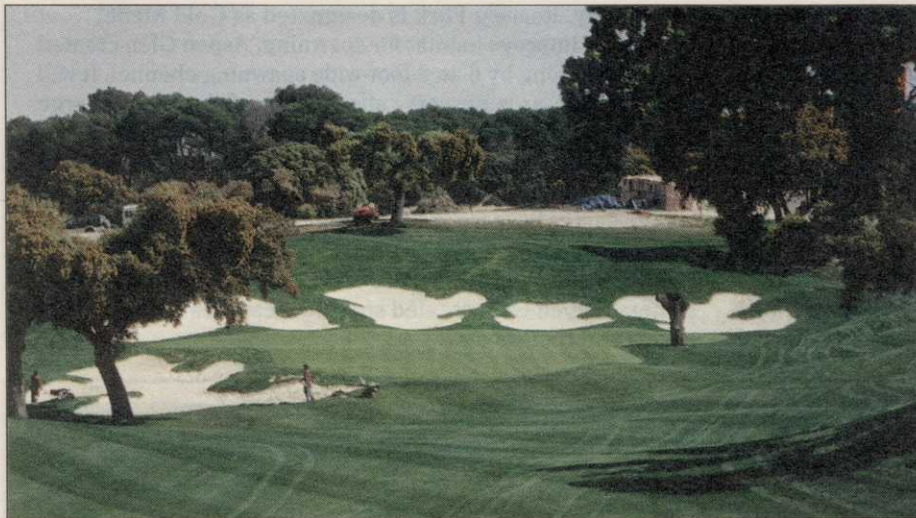
MADRID — Two golf courses that architect Robert von Hagge considers "as good as we've ever done anywhere" opened within a week of one another in June, here in Madrid and in Bogogno, Italy.

Real Sociedad Hipica Espanola Club de Campo opened its first 18 holes here June 14. Seven days later, Circolo Golf Bogogno, situated west northwest of Milan beneath the Alps, opened its first 18 holes. Both facilities will expand to 36 holes, the Milan course to open in mid-1998 and the Madrid course in 1999.

One of the top clubs in Spain, Real Sociedad Hipica Espanola Club de Campo is moving its headquarters from downtown, where urban sprawl has affected its property, according to von Hagge. It is an equestrian and golf club with 4,000 members.

Situated on "severe" topography, the course boasts "17 wonderful golf holes," said von Hagge co-designer Rick Baril. "When you have 17 out of 18 that are great, you're happy."

Developers followed unprecedented environmental and administrative negotiations on the project in the eight years



Real Sociedad Hipica Espanola Club de Campo is moving its headquarters from downtown Madrid, where urban sprawl has affected its property, to this, its new golf course.

since buying the property.

"Some of the oak trees are 300 to 400 years old and we had to preserve 90 percent of them," Baril said. "It has great charm ..."

"Great golf holes on great golf courses are on great pieces of property," said von Hagge. "The backgrounds of these holes are outstanding."

Since the clubhouse had been situated on the highest mountain on the property, there was a particular challenge in designing the course. Instead of using the valleys and ridges, von Hagge and Baril had to cut holes across the valleys and break through the ridges.

Nevertheless, "it turned out well," von Hagge said.

The clubhouse at Real Sociedad Hipica Espanola Club de Campo is under construction, and work on the second course should begin next summer, Baril said.

Baril said the property for the second course lends itself to a better design because of its clubhouse location.

"Fifty percent of a design is tactical excellence and 50 percent is beauty," he said.

The second course will finish facing the sun, which breaks an old rule of design. But von Hagge argued: "There's no greater beauty than back lighting. So if you're 15 percent to the left or right of it, a finishing hole is quite memorable."

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At Circolo Golf de Bogogno, Baril and von Hagge "created something better than anything else we've done over there," von Hagge said.

Citing Rinato Veronesi of developer Tio Tip for his preparations on the project, von Hagge said: "He allowed us to do what we wanted to do. And it's spectacular."

The land is ideal for golf, he said. "It possesses rolling hills, marshes, creeks — a kaleidoscope of experience, physically, with the Alps in the background when you look north and west."

Earth-moving was taking place on the final nine holes in mid-April, Baril said.

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