

Kay team busy on Indian course

By MARK LESLIE

DELHI, India — Public golf in India is about to become a reality. The Delhi Development Authority (DDA), in charge of beautifying this city of 6 million, has started the clearing and large earth-moving for its Public Golf Course Lado Sarai situated in the third city of Delhi called Tuglaqabad.

"They're very excited about this project," said Doug Smith, lead architect with Stephen Kay Golf Course Architects in Bronxville, N.Y. "They want to teach

people to play golf.

"It's the talk of the town because they have three private courses, but no public golf courses. The number of golfers is growing. They have long waiting lists to join Delhi Golf Club and The Army Golf Course."

An extensive 30-tee practice range, with a chipping area and putting greens, has already been completed at Public Golf Course Lado Sarai. It may be lighted at night. A full restaurant will be built for

the facility. Plans are to complete construction of the course by next March and open it late in the year.

The famous Qutub Minar monument, a 72.5-meter-high tower built by Qutub-din-Aibak in 1199, is visible from every hole, and the dominant feature of the course will be an ancient, 18-foot-high wall that borders one side of the property.

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Kay may be familiar to some Indian golfers. He designed the nine-hole Aravalli Golf Course in Faridabad near here in 1988 and nine-hole Royal Bhutan Golf Club in the Kingdom of Bhutan in 1986.

Kay and Player team on New York project

WEST NYACK, N.Y. — A new 18-hole private facility, Manhattan Woods, is under construction here. Constructed on 220 acres, this course will measure 6,800 yards and play to par 72. Golf course architect Stephen Kay and Gary Player Design Group teamed up on the design.

Construction began in February and the facility is expected to be open for play by July 1998. The construction contractor is Turco Renovations from New York.

Q&A with Kay

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teets joke about how we had this great 16- or 17-hole golf course on our drafting table. Doing a golf course is like doing a puzzle. It's not always easy.

GCN: Who is your favorite modern architect?

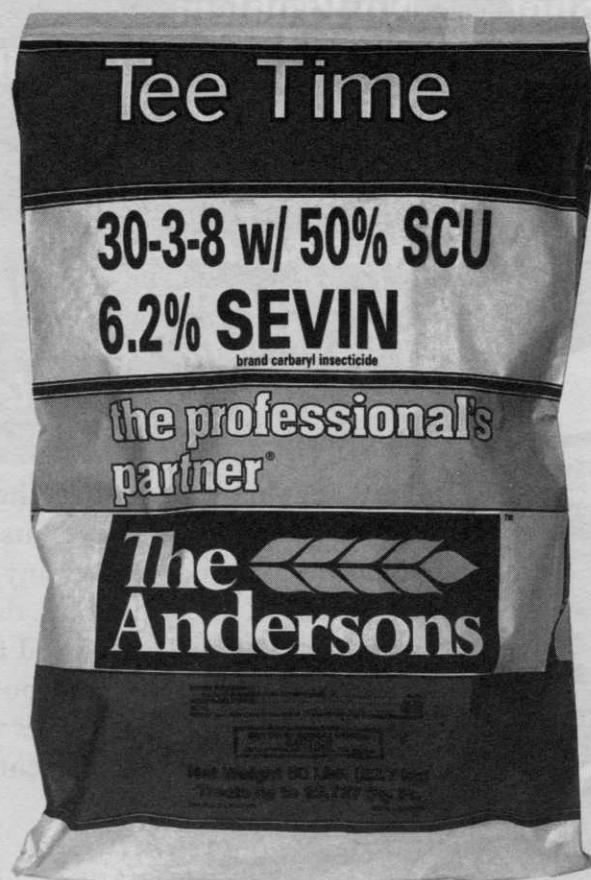
SK: People talk about the Golden Age of architecture in the '20s with the Tillinghasts and Rosses. I think the last 10 to 15 years is maybe even a better Golden Age. The quality of architecture is tremendous. There are architects working today who have been in business a long time, that when you look at their work 20 years ago and their work today it's much better work today — because of competition, because of the desire, because of the media. It all goes to Pete Dye and in the '70s. Slowly, but surely, golf course architecture started to become something very much recognized. Golfers cared about it. Magazines wrote about it. There are all these "best-of" lists. Whether they are good or bad, who's to say, but they've obviously brought a lot of media and public attention to golf course architecture.

GCN: Does anything weigh on your mind about the design business today?

SK: One negative thing: This celebrity label name that clients are wanting. In the '20s there were pros who dabbled in golf course architecture. But if you had a golf course today, who would you rather have had design it — Walter Hagan, or Tillinghast or Ross? I think it would be Tillinghast or Ross. And I think that's what's going to happen 20 or 30 years from now. People won't care that a big-time player who won two majors designed a golf course. They are going to want to know that it was Steve Smyers, or Bob Lohmann, or Stephen Kay. What's sad is, the real architects, the ones who have a real passion for design, are losing out on jobs. And they are paying these celebrities more than they're paying designers and we're working two to three years putting hundreds and thousands of hours in, while they're on site two or three times, get their pictures on it and the owners say it sells memberships. To me, what sells memberships is a good golf course that golfers want to play again and again.

It's getting ludicrous. I think it hurts us. These clients, if they would just think. You would be proud today to have a Pete Dye, or Tom Fazio or Rees Jones golf course. None of those guys are on the PGA Tour and they are designer-label names in a way. They are legitimate, qualified golf course architects. They have deserved what they have gotten. But today you have to have a Tour name. It's sad.

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