Beauty from ashes

By MARK LESLIE

SEAFFORD, Del. — Fortuitous, that is the operative word here, where Seaford Golf and Country Club opened a second nine holes on May 2. Fortuitous in terms of time and money.

Time: Because Seaford G&CC members had debated adding a second nine to their venerable nine for 15 years, and the government just happened to demand that the neighboring DuPont Corp. nylon plant dispose of acres of a byproduct, coal ash, that it had piled up over 30 years of operation.

Money: Because Seaford G&CC paid a mere $800,000 for a brand spanking new nine-hole course, while DuPont paid the remaining $1.2 million and still saved a couple million compared to the cost of disposing of the coal ash in another fashion.

"There is a 25-acre pocket of nylon buried on the site 8 to 10 feet deep," explained golf course architect Rich Mandell of Whole in Design Group in Durham, N.C., and Easton, Md. "They didn't know what to do with it.

"It was a wasteland. The ash was in a big pile in a field. They had three

PGA Tournament last fall and we seemed to be on the same page in terms of our philosophy of golf. It was Ernie's intent that he would not get involved, as some other professionals had, in doing a tremendous number of projects. He wanted a limited amount and to do them well and to be intimately involved.

I found him to be very thoughtful, and he listened well, which opened a great insight into our compatibility. We were both able to listen as opposed to dictate, which will result in a better relationship and a better product. We have met a number of times since then. We hiked the whole property in D.C. for hours trying to identify green and tee sites and let our imaginations run wild and see what the site would yield in terms of a great golf experience.

J. Michael Poellot's name is on golf courses from the People's Republic of China (the country's first private country club, Beijing Golf Club) to Japan and Thailand. But the 1966 Iowa State University landscape architecture graduate has done little in America since leaving a partnership with Dick Phelps and Brad Benz in Colorado 10 years ago. That is, until now.

A former vice president of the Robert Trent Jones II Group, heading Jones' overseas division, Poellot and JMP Golf Design Group partners Mark Hollinger, Bob Moore and Brian Castello are concentrating heavily on the United States, with a half dozen projects in the works.

"Rapid assessment, national survey on Audubon agenda

By MARK LESLIE

SELAIRK, N.Y. — A nationwide survey on environmental issues and a book enabling "rapid environmental assessment" of property for development appear on the horizon for Audubon International (AI) and may jump-start stalled attempts to build Audubon Golf Courses.

The Audubon courses, thought last fall to be on the verge of reality, still await that moment. Offered land from various private and public sources around the country, Al last fall formed the Audubon International Golf and the Environment Land Trust to develop courses that would also serve as environmental research and demonstration centers. Last September, with $300 million to $500 million in pledges from its principles, The Golf Co. was formed to partner with Al and identify and build Audubon Golf Courses.

The two parties expected to have two or three contracts in land by the end of the year. Admitting a long "period of frustration" finding the right property and circumstances, Al President Ron Dodson is still waiting for the first.

"We need the first one to be a home run," he said, "but more than that: We need people to know these will be Golf and the Environment 'research facilities' that happen to be golf courses, and they will be built in locations where we can test environmental issues in long-term research."

To that end, Dr. Larry Woolbright, dean of science at Siena

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