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FOES NO LONGER: GAUNT & MARNOCH LTD.
Jonathan Gaunt (right) and Steve Marnoch, two of England’s youngest golf course architects, have decided to join forces. Their mission: To become bigger players in the global golf course design market. See Q&A page 45.

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Poa annua control finally within sight
By MARK LESLIE
SAN DIEGO — A control for annual bluegrass, or poa annua, has been the desire of the golf course industry for at least half a century. Now it appears one has arrived, and the bonus is that it is a natural bacteria.

“If this works as well as it appears, it’s huge [for the industry],” said Dr. Joe Vargas of Michigan State University about the bacteria Xanthomonas campestris. “When I got into this business in the 1950s we were talking about how to get rid of poa annua. Here we are, 40 years later, talking about how to get rid of poa. And the market is almost nationwide.”

Acutely selective, Xanthomonas campestris kills only poa annua, not Poa annua.

Purdue embarks on 5-year course research project
By MARK LESLIE
WEST LAFAYETTE, Ind. — With the help of course architect Pete Dye, multiple donors and a group of students who built it, Purdue University on June 27 will open a golf course that will produce a major five-year study on the effects of golf maintenance on ground and surface water.

Pointing out that environmentalists criticize past corporate-funded studies as biased, Dye said: “What Purdue produces should be the most unbiased report, simply because there is no reason to be biased. Good or bad, no one can argue...”

Greece: Will 30 courses in 3 years be possible?
By TREVOR LEDGER
ATHENS, Greece — The Greek Government has made a startling commitment to golf course development with its stated intention of having 30 new golf courses built in its beautiful country over the next three years.

As the rest of Europe (on the whole) leaped into the golf course stratosphere—43.9 percent increase in courses since 1990 — Greece has bucked the trend by actually losing one of its five courses and leaving the country with only four.

This looks all set to change. The Hellenic Tourism Office (EOT) hosted a meeting at Wentworth last July for golf course architects, holiday companies and tourism specialists in order to out...
Greece aims for 30 courses

Continued from page 1

line the proposals. This was followed up in November 1997 with a congress in Thessalonica where the draft plans were firm up, to a degree at least.

Nikos Scoulas, director general of EOT, explained that the Greek government is pushing through a law which will give financial incentive to new golf projects in Greece and the Greek Islands. Grants will be worth approximately 40 percent of cost to developers, a vast figure which goes a long way towards confirming just how keen Greece is to develop golf courses quickly.

Costas Deriziotis, assistant to Scoulas, conveyed a steadfast determination on the part of Greece. "Greece assures the international community that it is willing to construct 30 golf courses during the next 3 years," said Deriziotis. "Greece meets all the prerequisites, an excellent climate, available properties, the required national legislation, the funds and the specialists.

Furthermore, as the Hellenic Tourism Organisation, have the technical specifications required for courses, ready for any investor. These standards are based on international standards and allow for quick state approval of grants and other incentives.

The incentives are lip smackingly attractive, including a 40-percent grant for new golf course construction with further grants — 100-percent tax breaks and... thanks to Turf Royale, the championship-quality turf fertilizer that combines nitrate and ammonium nitrogen, highly-soluble phosphate, and chloride-free potash in every prill. NPK the right way!

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Turf Royale is the professional turf fertilizer for all seasons, for a lot of reasons.

Continued from page 41

Manila

location — in the center of one of Asia’s largest cities — is overwhelming. There is no other site in a major city anywhere in the world where you could do this sort of project.

In addition to Fort Bonafacio, Fream and Co. are collaborating on five separate projects in The Philippines. In Silang, the firm is collaborating with Kwok Philippine Properties, Inc. (KPPP) on one of the country’s most ambitious real estate, commercial and leisure projects.

When completed, the Silang development will be home to more than 10,000 people, a Shangri-La hotel, shops, schools and commercial properties. The golf course, designed with help from PGA consultant Colin Montgomerie, will be an ultra-exclusive enclave within the 2,500-acre (1000-hectare) development.

Elsewhere, the 18-hole Crystaal Golf Club, developed by a Manila commercial real estate developer, will feature spectacular views of the volcanic Lake Taal — the “tall” in Crystaal. Located south of Manila, Lake Taal is a volcanic crater that features several islands — the products of still more volcanic activity. In nearby Tagaytay, Golfplan has also been contracted to provide master planning and design services for 36 holes at Batulao Highlands. The developers are a consortium of Filipino and Singaporean companies. In Cavite, Golfplan is working with Santa Lucia Development Inc. on Santa Lucia Saddle and Clubs Residential Estates.

At Sparrebosch, Golfplan’s hotly anticipated South African design, site construction is underway and dedicated course construction will begin in June, according to David Dale, Golfplan vice president and senior designer.

Dale added that Golfplan’s native plant restoration designs are complete, and the project has received all its approvals from South Africa’s various coastal commissions.

Located outside the resort town of Knysna, the 18-hole Sparrebosch course will sit atop a naturally contoured parcel on East Head, the spectacular headlands overlooking the Indian Ocean. Upon completion — a dramatic New Year’s Eve 1999 opening has been planned — Sparrebosch will be the southernmost golf course on the African continent. This will provide Golfplan a unique bookend, as the firm also designed the continent’s northernmost course: the 57-hole Golf de Tabarka Resort high above the Tunisian port city of Tabarka.
Greece eyes 30
Continued from previous page

a 40-percent grant against interest — de-
signed to quicken the pulse of any devel-
oper.

If doubts remain as to the financial
commitment involved, Deriziotis con-
figured the steely resolve: “Whatever the
cost, the Greek Government is ready to
make that investment.”

However there is an undercurrent of
unease throughout the industry as to how
realistic the target is. Bearing in mind
that another Southern European coun-
try, Italy, a country with a fairly estab-
lished golf course construction infrastruc-
ture, has had but 13 new courses over the
last three years — in itself a pretty im-
pressive figure.

One of the speakers at the Thessalonica
congress was British architect Howard
Swan. Swan said he is very excited at the
opportunities offered in Greece and has
the experience of working there on the
Glyfada course (original design by Donald
Harradine and updated by Robert Trent
Jones).

Nevertheless, Swan supplied a tell-
ing caveat pointing out that the 30
courses in three years proposal is far
too optimistic.

A number of architects who wished to
remain anonymous expressed concern
over the availability of land in Greece,
repeating the perceived view that small
plots were owned by very many individu-
als, thus making the required acreage for
a golf course a difficult purchasing propo-
sition.

Deriziotis gave the official, and very
different, story. “Land sites available in-
clude huge tracts of prime property owned
by the EOT, which will go out to tender,”
said Deriziotis. “Serious proposals have
already been accepted for 15 new golf
courses, one within each of the following
areas: Halkidiki, Thessaloniki, Kos Is-
land, South West Greece, Central Greece,
Avaissos, Argolida, Mytilini and Kefalonia.
There have been proposals on Crete, on
Rhodes.”

While Greece is an established tourist
region with many Germans and Britons
especially, making it their first choice
destination, the EOT is naturally keen to
expand upon that market share.

“The Greek golf development program
is definitely part of our [Greece’s] efforts
to attract activity-oriented tourism...that
will attract visitors all year round,” added
Deriziotis.

Then there are the spinoffs to consider:
A natural result of having so many courses
available will be an influx of domestic
players into the market.

With such a massive development un-
derway the scene is likely to resemble an
international gathering of the golf course
industry.

The involvement of Greek profession-
als seems to be assured as Deriziotis infor-
mns: “We have both, [course archi-
tect and constructor] and a very ca-
ble Greek Technical Chamber that can
carry out a call for contract ten-
ers. Additional golf personnel, e.g.
greenkeepers, could come from our
present army of professional garden-
ers with the state subsidising retrain-
ing programs.

The EOT has already proposed train-

INTERNATIONAL REPORT

What ever the cost, the Greek
Government is ready to make
that investment.’
— Costas Deriziotis

York & Martin Ltd. Co-director Phillip
York came straight to the point: The big
issue in Greece is water with maybe 3,000
cubic meters per day required on a golf
course.
Yet some villages have their water sup-
plied by tanker.

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