

BRIEFS



SUBURBAN CLUB GETS FACELIFT

PIKESVILLE, Md. — The A.W. Tillinghast-designed Suburban Club of Baltimore County is undergoing a \$1 million improvement plan supervised by golf course architect Brian Ault of Ault, Clark and Associates. Improvements include new drainage with a holding pond on the 11th hole, recontouring fairways and converting them from ryegrass to bentgrass, rebuilding or enlarging tees, tree planting, bunker improvements, and a supplemental golf car storage building. Projects will be carried out over the next five years.

SNEVA BUILDS SECOND COURSE

LAVONDALE, Ariz. — Former Indianapolis 500 winner Tom Sneva has announced his newest golf course project, Coldwater Springs Golf Club here. "The site presents a terrific opportunity," said golf course architect Forrest Richardson. "We are basically taking a flat canvas and transforming it into a golfing roller coaster." Sneva's first project, The 500 Club, is located in north Phoenix and opened in 1990. Richardson has routed the 18-hole, par-72 course as part of a master drainage and floodwater system for the community. The course is expected to open for play in the fall.

DIABLO CREEK GETTING REDO

CONCORD, Calif. — The city of Concord has selected Golf Dimensions to provide development management and construction management services for the \$2 million renovation of the city-owned Diablo Creek Golf Course. Robert Muir Graves & Damian Pascuzzo Limited will design the renovation of the daily-fee course, originally built in 1963 as the Concord Municipal Golf Course. The design phase is scheduled for completion in May, and the completion of the renovation work is anticipated by October.

TOLL BROTHERS BUSY BUILDING

HUNTINGDON VALLEY, Pa. — Toll Brothers, Inc. has formed a joint venture with Aera Energy LLC, California's largest oil producer, to initiate development of an 840-acre community in northern Orange County, which will include more than 2,100 lots and a 200-acre public golf course. Toll Brothers spokesman is in various stages of design, planning or construction for master-planned communities in New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Virginia, North Carolina, Florida and Michigan.

Flat pipe a money-saver in greens construction

COLUMBUS, Ohio — Operating on the philosophy that it is more profitable to reduce expenses through innovation than by cheapening the product, a growing number of golf course projects are installing or remodeling putting greens with a new drainage technique.

The key ingredient is a flat, perforated corrugated plastic pipe called AdvanEDGE, made by Advanced Drainage Systems, Inc. (ADS) here. Developed in 1988 as an edge drain to be installed vertically alongside highways, AdvanEDGE reportedly has about twice the soil contact area of 4-inch round pipe, and will collect and drain water almost twice as quickly.

In the early 1990s, football stadiums began laying the pipe horizontally under the playing turf and found that this accelerated water collection from heavy rainfalls. The concept has since spread to other recreational areas, and now golf courses.

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One of the earlier Hurdzan-Fry greens showing ADS AdvanEDGE pipe installed horizontally on the sub-base.

Atlantic City takes aggressive golf tack



Stephen Kay-designed Blue Heron Pines is part of Atlantic City's package.

By JOHN TORSIELLO

ATLANTIC CITY, N.J. — Atlantic City is known for its casinos, the Miss America Beauty Pageant and saltwater taffy. If the Greater Atlantic City Golf Association (GACGA) gets its way, the city and surrounding area will be known also for its golf courses.

The association is in the midst of an effort to attract golfers and grab a higher profile for its eight members: Sand Barrens, Harbor Pines, Blue Heron, Cape May National and Mays Landing golf clubs, Brigantine Golf Links, Great Bay Resort and Country Club, and Seaview Resort. The group is aggressively marketing stay-and-play packages, some in consort with casinos and hotels in the area. While a few casinos have bought into golf as a selling point, the owners of most of the city's gambling establishments have yet to embrace the game as a means to lengthen the time visitors stick around the city.

The reason? An old fear that anything which takes gamblers out of the gaming rooms is bad for business.

Despite the reluctance of some casino owners, GACGA

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QA Ross Watson to keep foot in Asian door

INDOOROPILLY, Queensland, Australia — Ross Watson is a past president of the Society of Australian Golf Course Architects and one of GCNI's first sources for background on Australia and Asian course development. GCNI recently spent a few minutes with Watson to discuss the recent downsizing of his Malaysian office and how he sees his architecture business riding out the waves of the current economic storm. The smart money, said Watson, will be poised and ready when the inevitable recovery comes around.

Golf Course News: As an architect who has used Asia as a primary target, can you give us a snapshot of the Asian market from where you sit today?

Ross Watson: We've had an office in Malaysia for about 4 years or so. In fact, I lived there three years up until a year ago. Just a few weeks ago we downsized that operation significantly, obviously due to our read of the economic situation. Projects were, virtually, overnight, being put on hold or canceled. We made a major effort there building our niche in the market, and frankly we were looking forward to finally reaping some rewards. And then this happens. So, from where I sit, I see four years of hard work and not much to show for it at this point of time.

GCN: What did you have to do to achieve this downsizing?

RW: We went from six people, like a year ago to, say, one and a half now. We've got one local person that's full time just keeping the thing going — paying the bills, trying to collect money.

My partner or I may go up as necessary, probably a couple of weeks per month, just to finish off some projects we've been working on that have now virtually finished, so in that way we're fairly fortunate because even in this bad market and this bad economy, we'd probably be the only golf designers that are bringing on new projects in the Johor Bahru region right now. So what that means to us is that there will be no other golf courses coming on there in the next year or two so they'll only be able to talk about that one. And if things turn around, well, maybe that'll be good for us.

GCN: A lot of people in the industry are telling us to sit tight and wait for another two years and we're going to see things slowly get back on its feet. Is this your read?

RW: Whether it's two years or five years, I couldn't

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Ross Watson

Flat pipe

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Dr. Michael Hurdzan of Hurdzan-Fry Design here first adapted this product to the unique requirements of putting greens. David Whelchel, a project manager with Hurdzan-Fry, said anything that will make greens better and less costly to build will have bottom-line benefits to course managers.

"The flat-pipe idea just made a lot of sense to us," he said. "With its bigger surface area, it does a better job of taking water out of the bottom of the all-sand California green profile than conventional round pipe and gravel."

But the main reason the flat-pipe technique is attracting attention, according to Whelchel, is that "it saves a lot in construction costs. Although the material cost of AdvanEDGE is higher than round pipe, there are no trenches to be dug, no gravel backfill to buy, and no trench spoils to dispose of.

"Our experience," he said, "shows that the installed cost of flat pipe is about half the cost of traditional drain pipe, maybe even less. This can add up to \$30,000 to \$40,000 in savings for 18 holes."

The first Hurdzan-Fry course to use flat pipe was Westwood Plateau in Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada. Others include Widow's Walk in Scituate, Mass., and Tall Woods by the Sea in Forster, New South Wales, Australia.

AdvanEDGE pipe is normally sold with a geotextile fabric wrap to filter out soil fines. If the greens mixture and surrounding soils are relatively free from migratory fine soils, Hurdzan-Fry permits the pipe to be installed without the filter wrap. ADS can produce the pipe with narrower "sand slot" perforations, an option Hurdzan-Fry normally recommends.

ADS also offers a standard line of couplings, tees and wyes designed specifically for horizontal installation of AdvanEDGE pipe, along with standard round outlet pipe and other accessories for the golf course construction industry.

Several construction companies in the Midwest report positive results with flat piping. In St. Louis, Jack Litvay Management and Construction has built 50 such greens, and plans to try the same idea with bunkers.

"We started our construction business three years ago," said Litvay, "and my son (who has a degree in finance) said we were spending too many hours digging trenches for drainage pipe. I talked with Mike Hurdzan, got some AdvanEDGE, and it's really made a difference. The bottom of the green is easier to form,

and two men can tile five greens in a single day."

Pete Van De Hey, owner of Mid-Vallee Golf Course in DePere, Wis., heard about flat pipe at a Hurdzan-Fry seminar in 1996. Doing virtually all the work himself, Van De Hey added a third nine holes to his course, each with a California green over the AdvanEDGE pipe.

"I believe we saved about \$35,000 over the cost of USGA

greens," he said, "and it is draining well. We were able to cut the greens to 1/4 inch just two months after seeding... the roots were down 10 inches. I've never seen turf come in so fast."

After 30 years of building courses around the country, Salyers Golf Construction, Inc. of Galena is installing its first flat-tiled greens at Dornoch Country Club in nearby Delaware, Ohio. Kenny Holmes, vice

president of Salyers, said it took a little getting used to.

"At first, we didn't see that we were saving that much time with the flat pipe, but as we got into it, it became obvious that this was going to save the owners money," he said. "We were using fewer people and less equipment because there were no trenches and no spoils to haul away. The sand installed in the greens cavities was a California blend, and was clean

enough so that we could eliminate the filter wrap on the pipe."

Whelchel at Hurdzan-Fry said AdvanEDGE has already proved it self as a genuine way to improve the playability of putting greens at a far lower cost.

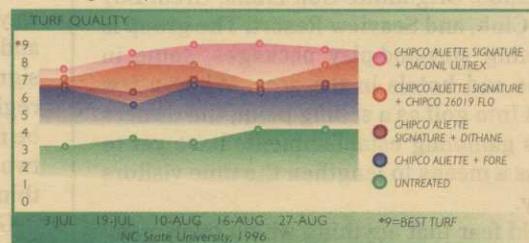
"We're working with the USGA to keep golf affordable for average-income people," he said. "Finding imaginative new ways to use existing products is a good way to help achieve this goal."

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