Design & Construction
Take a closer look into the trends that are driving golf course development into the future.

Jack Speaks on Architecture
After a round at his latest track, Jack Nicklaus sits down to discuss his work with GCN.

John Deere looks skyward
With its recent acquisition of Charlestown, Mass.-based Player Systems Corp., manufacturer of the SkyLinks golf course management technology that utilizes the global position system (GPS), John Deere has taken a long look up into the future.

La. to grow golf image
Louisiana officials plan to approach the state Legislature with a master plan to finance construction of seven to 10 courses throughout the Pelican State, making it more attractive to visiting and native golfers.

L-93 holds it own in NTEPs
While the A and G series of bentgrasses have been grabbing the headlines the past couple of years, L-93 has quietly taken the grand prize in the final report of the National Turfgrass Evaluation Program tests for putting-green bents.

KollStar Golf Co. up to a dozen courses in eight months
The Ocean Course at Cabo del Sol, Los Cabos, Mexico, is a KollStar-owned and managed property. To learn more about this fast-growing company, see story page 33.
La. targets golf

Continued from page 1

the country in terms of number of courses and has watched

nearby states like Alabama (Robert Trent Jones Trail), Ten-

nessee (Bear Trace) and Mississippi (Magnolia Trace) become

involved in course construction as

a way to attract golfers.

"I've seen the effect of Louisi-

ana people going to Alabama

spending money hand over fist

on golf," said James Leitz,

head professional at semiprivate Pine-

wood Country Club in Slidell,

located 35 miles north of New

Orleans. Leitz said at least 10

Pinewood members own condo-

miniums in Gulf Shores, Ala.,

where they go to play on that

country's courses and beaches.

"These upscale public facili-

ties, when built and managed

properly like the Robert Trent

Jones Trail courses, are an at-

traction. There's no doubt I'm

seeing money from Louisiana

being spent in Alabama. I'd like

to keep those people here."

"I don't look at it as a huge

amount of direct competition. It

would just heighten the quality

golf everywhere. The more

people who say 'let's play golf in

Louisiana' the better."

Romero said officials have ex-

pressed interest in various lev-

els of courses, ranging from af-

fordable public layouts to more

upscale, resort-type facilities.

"It will be a little price driven," 

Marty said. "You can't do an Au-

gusta at every location. But if you

do nice, high-quality daily-fee

courses that provide services we

aren't used to seeing in Louisiana

daily-fee courses, and do them

in the right locations, it will be

highly successful."

Louisiana architect Jim Lipe,

who is working on the four Jack

Nicklaus Bear Trace courses be-

ing built near state parks in Ten-

nessee, said: "It's a good idea if

they do the courses in a first-class

way. Anything less won't work."

Leitz said quality courses that

visitors and native Louisianans

have forced course operators in the Pelican

State to improve their own lay-

outs. Since converting from a

private to a semiprivate club four

years ago, Pinewood has built a

driving range, undertaken lake

tee construction, improved

drainage and conducted a mas-

ter plan under the direction of

course architect Bill Bergen.

"Ninety percent of the golf

courses being built now are semi-

private or public," Leitz said.

"Twenty years ago you joined a

private club if you wanted to play

a course that was worth a darn

down here. Now those [upscale

public] facilities have pushed the

envelope for private and semi-

private clubs, like ours, to

change and improve. A guy goes

and plays the Robert Trent Jones

Trail and comes back and asks,

'Why aren't our fairways that

good?' You tell him that's 419 Ber-

muda and we're playing on old

common. Or they've got irriga-

tion and we don't. It just height-

ever's everyone's awareness of golf."

The state officials' plan is to

build the new courses over the

next five to 10 years on state-

owned or donated land near state

parks and other accessible loca-

tions. Officials envision courses

costing in the $5 million to $6

6 million range, with the state and

private developers contributing

to the projects.

"We have a lot of wetlands is-

sues in Louisiana, especially in

the southern part of the state," 

Leitz said. "A lot of the state parks

are in or near wetlands. Maybe

the state can clear those hurdles

easier than a private citizen

could. They are going to have to

convince the people that it is

better to take 150 acres out of a

wetland and make a golf course 

out of it. They won't have any

trouble convincing me that it's

better. But they might have

trouble convincing people who

don't know anything about golf."

The new Cypress Bend Golf

Club at Toledo Bend in Sabine

Parish and the proposed Tour-

nament Players Club course near

Bayou Segnette State Park could

get the ball rolling.

Tourism Department Secre-
tary Phillip Jones said courses

could be built next year in

Mandeville at Fontainebleau

State Park in the southern part

of the state and on Lake

Clairborne in north Louisiana

between Ruston and Shreveport.

"Building near state parks is a

good way to go," Lipe agreed.

The state would seek a profes-

sional management firm to oper-

ate any new layout.

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