

BRIEFS

HOUSTON — Sunrise Colony Co. announced plans for Royal Oaks Country Club, a 500-acre, 1,100-home private community situated in the Westchase district of Houston. The project will be built on the site of the defunct Andrau Airpark. Native Houstonian Fred Couples will design the 7,000-yard, par-72 course. Completion of the first homes and the opening of the course are anticipated by late 1999.

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LOS ANGELES — The Los Angeles Recreation and Parks Department plans to renovate the 49-year-old Rancho Park golf course. The \$6 million improvement program includes upgrading the driving range and existing irrigation system and rebuilding all 18 greens. Plans also call for the construction of 15 alternate greens. Work could begin by spring 1999.

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NACO, Ariz. — The newly expanded Turquoise Valley Golf Course is set to open Jan. 15. The \$1-million project includes a nine-hole addition, upgraded putting green, and renovation of the original nine holes. Turquoise Valley is Arizona's oldest, continuously operated golf facility.

Golden Bear, Weitz form construction venture

NORTH PALM BEACH, Fla. — Golden Bear Golf (GBG) Inc. and The Weitz Co. Inc. have announced the formation of Weitz Golf International (WGI) LLC, a construction company focused on building golf courses and clubhouses worldwide.

As part of a new alliance with Weitz Golf, Golden Bear will offer golf course construction expertise and marketing assistance. Golden Bear will no longer offer construction services independently and will share in the profitability of Weitz Golf.

Weitz Chairman of the Board Richard Oggero said WGI will provide general contracting, design-build and construc-

tion management services to developers and designers.

"Golden Bear Golf made a decision to team with a contractor who has a national reputation for quality and integrity. Weitz met our criteria to a 'T', GBG Chairman Jack Nicklaus said.

"Weitz has the capacity and financial strength to handle complex projects. Moreover, Weitz impressed us with its innovative systems in budgeting, scheduling, cost control, and value analysis and engineering. We concluded that this is the best way to move our construction operations forward."



Weitz's resume includes The Links at Spanish Bay in Pebble Beach, Calif. The company also constructed clubhouses for John's Island Golf Course (GC) in

Vero Beach, Fla.; the Tonto Verde GC in Rio Verde, Ariz.; Ibis Golf and Country Club (CC) in Palm Beach Gardens, Fla.; Ancala GC in Scottsdale, Ariz.; Columbine CC in Littleton, Colo.; and Binks Forest Club in Wellington, Fla.

From floods to fairways in Indy

By ANDREW OVERBECK

ENGLISH, Ind. — Mother Nature be damned.

These days landfills, old mines, deserts, even flood plains can be converted into playable courses. And when the people of English, complete their move to higher ground this winter, developers will level the old town's neighborhoods and commercial buildings and commence construction of a Michael Hurdzan-designed 18-hole course.

But there's more to the master plan.

The course is being built entirely by the local community. The project will cost roughly \$1 million — utilizing area volunteers for labor, locally raised money and special golf-industry agreements.

Cary Hammond, a partner in Sterling Development Corp., the developer who hatched the plan, said the project is a community-led effort to breathe new life into the area's tired economy. "The town will be revitalized by this golf course project and the growth it produces," said Hammond.

He has assembled a corps of 52 local,

heavy-machinery operators, who have volunteered to work through the winter on the rough-in construction. Many volunteers are local builders, who work during the year constructing roads, bridges, and dams, and have donated their labor during a slow time of the year. Local course builder Carl March will oversee construction.

When rough-in construction is finished this spring, March and one of his shapers will put the finishing touches on the layout.

Developers took care has to build all greens above the 100-year flood stage.

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