Ojai Valley
reclaiming great
Thomas par-3

Continued from page 1

Built in 1923 by the legendary Thomas, the Ojai course was immediately hailed as "the cream of Southern California golf courses." During World War II, the U.S. Army took over the resort as a training camp, stationing 1,000 troops here from 1942-44. The U.S. Navy occupied the resort as an "R&R" facility for officers from 1944-45.

Before returning the property to private ownership at the end of the war, the government sold off the last of the Quonset huts and platform tents that had occupied the front nine of the course, and attempted to restore the links.

Unfortunately, it did not rebuild it according to Thomas' original design.
Today's holes No. 2 and 5 replaced two holes originally positioned along the edges of the property. One of these holes, the original 3rd, was known to be one of Thomas' favorite par-3s and was built to resemble the famous 3rd hole at Pine Valley Golf Club.

The Ojai hole was featured in three golf course architecture books: Golf Architecture in America by Thomas, The Captain by Geoff Shaddock, and The Links by Thomas Hunter.

Today, more than 50 years since these holes were lost and forgotten, careful research by Greenslit has brought them once again to light. Using old photographs in Thomas' book, he found the precise location of the original 3rd and 4th holes.

Ben Crenshaw and Greenslit agree on the merits of re-introducing the "lost holes."

Reconstruction on the two lost holes (which will become Nos. 7 and 8) has begun, and an opening date is planned for late fall. Ultimately, the front and back nines will be switched, improving the overall balance of the course.

O'Meara excited, searching for personal style

Continued from page 35

O'Meara: I'm going to stop in and see what's going on. I will be up there five to eight times a year.

O'Meara: I really want to do. Internationally, I'm going to stop in and see what's going on. I will be up there five to eight times a year.

O'Meara: I will be doing some blastings, but we are going to try and work around it. We will also have to work around marshland to keep all that, environmentally intact. The site is good, there is no reason to disturb it.

GCN: What kind of design team have you put together?

O'Meara: I'm working with Brit Stenson, who has been in the business for about 25 years. With his knowledge and my eye we are going to do something good together.

GCN: How will you fit design work in with your playing schedule?

O'Meara: I'm going to go to college as much as possible and I am going to try and visit the site as often as possible in each part of construction to make sure that we are going in the right direction. I go through Toronto a lot this year playing in different events. I will be up there five to eight times at least. If I am anywhere near the place I am going to stop in and see what's going on.

GCN: In ten years, how many O'Meara design courses will be out there?

O'Meara: In the next two years I will compete at a good clip and then I'll be 44 years old and my playing commitments will start to taper off. Then, I will get more into design, but right now I will take on two to three per year. I will balance it right now to make sure that this is something that I really want to do. Internationally, I'm going to do some courses in Ireland, and new designs may be materializing in California, Florida and Utah.