

## BRIEFS

**EAST AMWELL TOWNSHIP, N.J.** — Tom Fazio is set to begin work on an 18-hole, private layout at The Ridge at Back Brook this fall. The course will meander across 300 acres of varied terrain and Back Brook stream, said developer Joel Moore. According to Fazio, the course has 25 to 30 exceptional natural settings for golf holes. The course, in addition to a clubhouse and practice range, is slated to be completed in summer 2001.

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**PALMA SOLA, Fla.** — The Estuary has received approval from the Manatee County Commission following lengthy negotiations with commissioners. The project, which is being developed by Robinson Farms, Inc., is slated to include an 18-hole course and 448 homes. The development of the Estuary had been held up due to environmental and drainage concerns and confusion over a county-owned right of way. Robinson Farms won the commission over when it announced plans to restore shoreline buffers and reconnect 100 acres of mangroves with the tidal system of the Perico Bayou.

# Record number of courses under construction in U.S.

**JUPITER, Fla.** — According to the National Golf Foundation's latest annual report on facility development in the U.S., in addition to the 448 courses that opened last year, there were an additional 1,069 courses under construction as of Jan. 1, 1999, of which 870 are scheduled for completion this year.

And there are another 708 courses across the country that are in the planning stage of development. This is the third straight year and only the fourth

time since 1990 that the "in planning" total has eclipsed 700.

In looking at the probability of 870 new courses coming on line in 1999, National Golf Foundation historical data shows that less than 60 percent of construction projects in any given year meet their original completion dates.

Consequently, the projected number of courses that will open in 1999 may be closer to 500 which would still surpass the 1995 record by a wide margin.

Speaking of records, the 1,069 courses under construction at any one point in time is an all-time high. The previous mark was 932 set in 1997.

NGF Research Manager Jim Kass points out, "if just a few more of the courses that were scheduled to open last year had met their completion dates, 1998 would have been the record year everyone had expected it to be." "However," says Kass, "last year was one of extremes for bad weather, and delays were encountered almost everywhere. As a result, a fair share of courses with late 1998 completion dates were forced to slip over into 1999. This was especially true for projects in the northern parts of the country."

As has been the case throughout most of the past 10 years, a significant number of courses coming online in 1998 were nine-holers. Last year, they accounted for 54 percent or 241 of the 448 courses built. And of these, nearly 60 percent were additions to existing facilities.

"Among other things," says Kass, "this tells us that a fair amount of the new facilities are being opened nine holes at a time. At the same time, it also says that

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### Courses opened in 1998

Rank	State	Courses
1	Michigan	34
2	Florida	33
3	California	21
4	Pennsylvania	19
5-T	Indiana	18
5-T	Georgia	18
7-T	Illinois	17
7-T	Wisconsin	17
9-T	Minnesota	16
9-T	North Carolina	16
9-T	Virginia	16

### Courses under construction (as of 12/31/98)

Rank	State	Courses
1	Florida	81
2	California	79
3	Michigan	63
4	New York	54
5	Texas	52
6-Tied	Pennsylvania	43
6-Tied	Ohio	43
8	Georgia	38
9	Wisconsin	36
10	Virginia	35

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# Dye donates design to Wis. monks

By ANDREW OVERBECK

SPARTA, Wis. — Architect Pete Dye has teamed up with monks at the Our Lady of Spring Bank Cistercian Abbey, here, to design a public access golf course on 200 acres of monastery property.

Local businessman David Colbert has committed the remaining 100 acres to the project, which is tentatively set to begin construction this August.

Dye agreed to waive his de-

sign fee for the course, which is being built by the monks as a means to remain self-supporting.

The monks, who are now living off the interest from a trust fund, recently figured that the trust income will eventually fail to sustain them.

Along with Colbert, the monks conducted a feasibility study that

showed that a public, daily-fee course could be supported by the community and tourism traffic. The monks are betting that the golf course will provide them with a steady source of income for years to come.

The 18-hole course will be all bentgrass, feature five sets of tees and is slated to be 7,475 yards long, one of the longest courses in the Upper Midwest.

"They have a beautiful piece of land, and it has nice sandy soil," said Dye.

Dye has already drawn out the preliminary routing for the course, but maintains that the next step in the development process is going to hinge on getting the construction financed.

"The only way the course is going to work for them is if they go into golf course operation

debt free," Dye said of the proposed golf course facility.

"They have to be able to run that thing and make a living off it. I'm not about to go in there and get them into debt and have them lose their land."

Dye plans to work with other golf-related companies in the coming months to raise funds to finance the construction of the golf course.

## New courses

Continued from page 3

more and more nine-hole courses today are expanding to meet increased local demand." As Kass is quick to point out, roughly 35 percent, or 5,600 of the nation's total golf course supply, is comprised of nine-hole layouts.

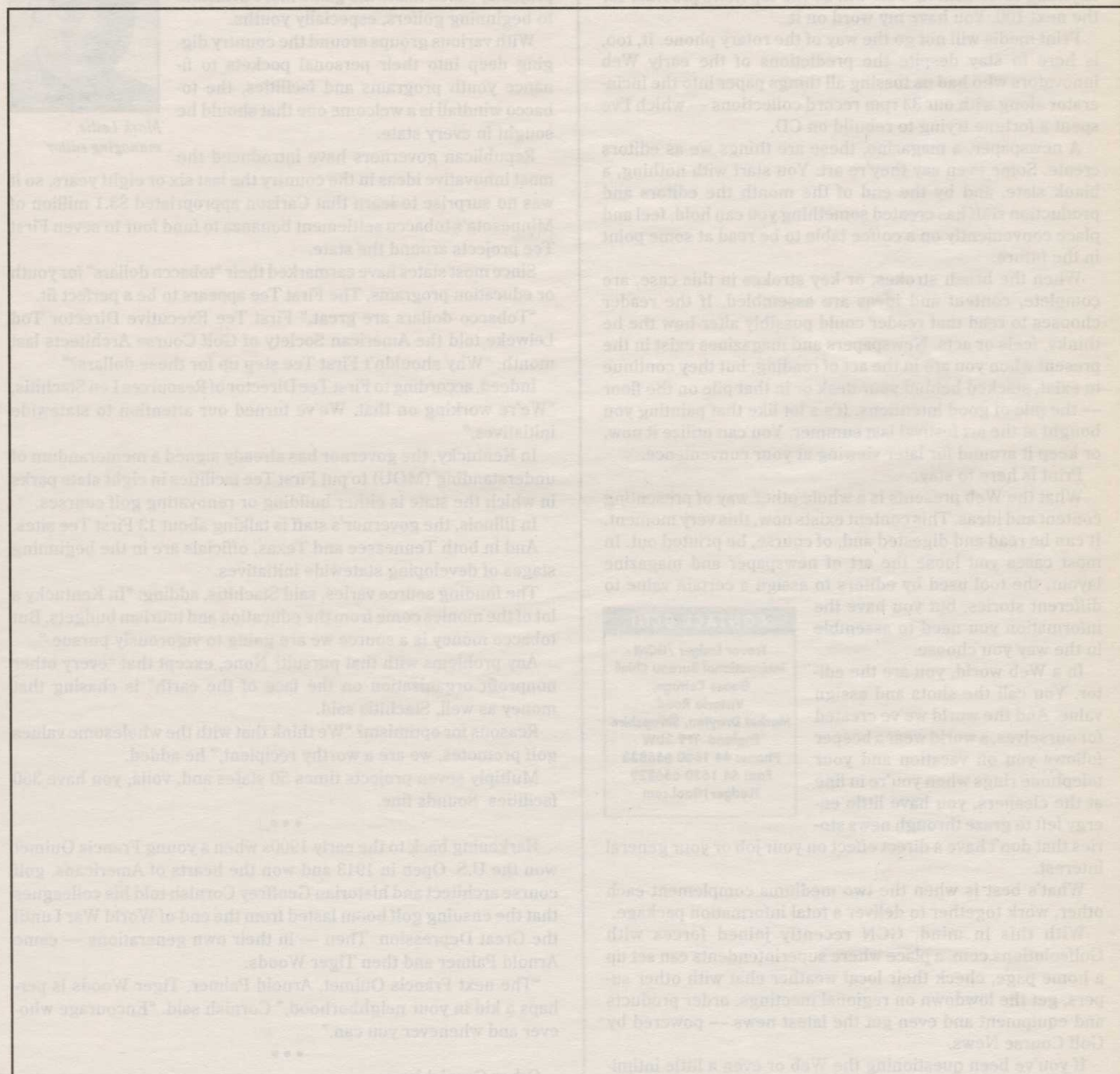
The new NGF facilities report provides updated information and a number of other statistical insights into the health and direction of golf course development in the United States. Among them:

- **18-hole Equivalents**—Because it contained such a high number of nine-hole courses, the 448 courses coming on line in 1998 were equivalent to 327.5 18-hole courses.

- **Hot Spots** — Michigan, Florida and California were once again the leaders in new construction activity. As has been the case for several years now, these three states accounted for roughly 20 percent of all projects that were either completed or began construction in 1998. Also among the top 10 in both categories for 1998 are Pennsylvania, Georgia and Wisconsin.

- **Public vs. Private** — Following the trend of the past 25 to 30 years, the vast majority [86 percent or 386] of the new courses built last year were public access and, of these courses, more than 90 percent were daily-fee. The report also shows that the number of private courses in the United States increased by only 10 in 1998, the lowest net gain in several years.

- **Real Estate** — Approximately 40 percent or 178 of the golf course development projects completed last year were part of housing developments. Although this percentage is somewhat less than the 60 percent it was 10 years ago, it underscores the fact that the real-estate market continues to be a significant force in golf course development. As it has for many years now, Florida once again led all states with 30 new real-estate related courses. Michigan and North Carolina were next with 13 and 10, respectively.



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\*NTEP data available upon request. Based on 1997 report.

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