

# GOLF COURSE NEWS

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## INSIDE

### Paspalum proliferating

Paspalum's popularity is surging worldwide due to its ability to tolerate adverse conditions.....15

### On the blocks

Course acquirers find the best market in years, but funding is growing tight.....46



#### SUPERINTENDENTS ROLL INTO DALLAS

The 72nd annual Golf Course Superintendents Association of America Conference and Show will be held in Dallas Feb. 10-17. Turn to page 38 for comprehensive coverage of this year's show including a schedule of events, election information, award updates and a city guide to Dallas.

#### COURSE MAINTENANCE

Krueger warns of water wars.....13  
Tools of the Trade at Burger's The Quarry GC.....14  
Modular greens extend playing season.....19

#### COURSE DEVELOPMENT

Newport National finally on track ..... 21  
Black Gold Golf Club near L.A. opening soon ..... 24  
International report: Fream in the Sahara ..... 32

#### COURSE MANAGEMENT

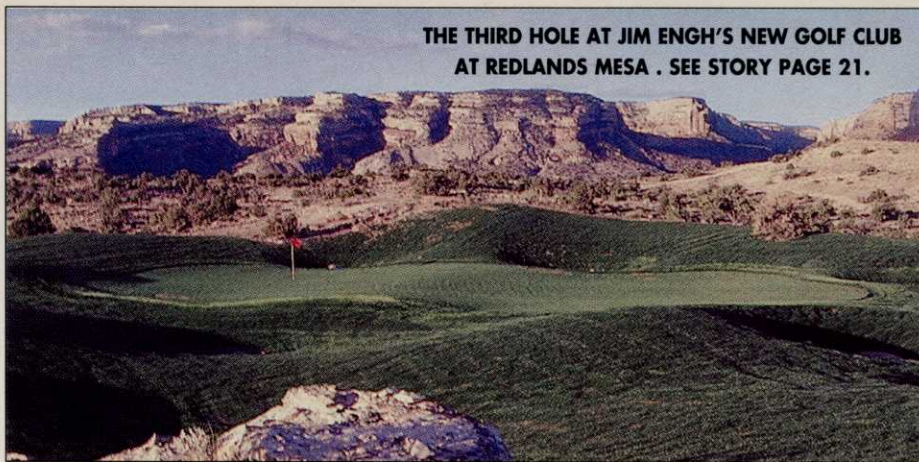
Heritage Golf Group adds five ..... 44  
Honours Golf continues to grow ..... 45  
Myrtle Beach named top golf resort ..... 47

#### SUPPLIER BUSINESS

Syngenta ready for business..... 50  
GreenIndustry rolls out Internet software.....50  
New products abound ..... 55

PERIODICAL

THE THIRD HOLE AT JIM ENGH'S NEW GOLF CLUB  
AT REDLANDS MESA . SEE STORY PAGE 21.



## Big lenders throttling back on new course development financing

By JAY FINEGAN

ATLANTA — Is the party over?

After an all-time high for new golf course openings — 515 last year — the financing climate for course construction has suddenly turned cold. Bankers such as Jeff Burkle at Textron Financial Corp. here in Atlanta, and others across the country, are sharply curtailing new loans.



By some estimates, the number of courses securing financing this year will fall between 30 and 50 percent from 2000 levels.

"There are a lot of projects on the books, just waiting to have their finance packages completed, that are dying on the vine," said Lee Hetrick, executive director of the Golf Course Builders Association of America. "It's got to be a smokin' deal to get funded right now."

#### SUPPLY OUTSTRIPPING DEMAND

Bankers cite several reasons for the credit tightening, beginning with the overall economy, which may be verging on recession. During an economic downturn,

Continued on page 58

## Textron Golf & Turf continues integration, closes Racine plant

By ANDREW OVERBECK

AUGUSTA, Ga. — In a continued effort to integrate its businesses, Textron Golf Turf & Specialty Products has announced that it is closing its Jacobsen manufacturing facility in Racine, Wis. The company plans to consolidate the manufacturing done at the Racine plant at its more modern Jacobsen facility in Charlotte, N.C.

The decision to streamline its manufacturing processes builds off the company's original consolidation plan announced in May that combined the management of its turf care equipment and E-Z-GO product lines.

The division's new CEO, Greg Hyland, said improving manufacturing efficiencies is of prime importance.

"We are continually looking at our manufacturing processes to improve efficiencies, reduce cycle times and be a much more effective manufacturer," he said. "We have started the process and



Greg Hyland

Continued on page 54

## Colorful cowboy converts ranch into links-style layout

By DOUG SAUNDERS

ANTIOCH, Calif. — For the past 26 years Jack Roddy has lived the life of the American cowboy, raising cattle on his 2,200-acre ranch on the eastern edge of the town of Antioch. Just as his father did in the 1940s, Jack ran cattle across the rolling grasslands and toiled to make ends meet.

During the prime years, 40,000 head of cattle roamed these hills, located 45 minutes east of San Francisco. But the stupendous Bay Area population surge of the last decade has turned Antioch into a city of 82,000 people, while the profits in

Continued on page 37



The 12th hole at Roddy Ranch Golf Club, 45 minutes east of San Francisco

## Experts urge global assault on Asian beetle

By JOEL JOYNER

WASHINGTON — Insect-control officials here and elsewhere are calling for a worldwide attack on the Asian Longhorned Beetle, one of the most lethal tree-killers on the planet.

A native of China, Japan and Korea, the beetle has now been found in 14 locations in the

Continued on page 58



The Asian Longhorned Beetle



## Roddy Ranch to herd golfers

Continued from page 1

ranching have been dismal.

"The economics of raising livestock and staying ahead of the tax collector reached the point that Roddy had to come up with a new plan to maintain his lifestyle. Through a close associate he was introduced to the world of golf as a way to preserve his passion—his beloved ranch.

Roddy had the primary raw material for golf—lots of land. But more than that, his property featured the kind of varied terrain and wide vistas that practically guarantee a great golf course.

"When I brought out Bob Moore, the lead designer, I asked him what kind of a golf course I could have here," Roddy said. "Bob said that it would be one of the best in the state. I had never played golf in my life, so I left the job of building the course to the professionals."

### REMINISCENT OF IRELAND

Moore is a design partner with J. Michael Poellot Golf Design Group, and what he created is a memorable golf course that hugs the grasslands as it uses all the advantages of elevation change and natural green sites.

The course plays from 5,400 yards to 6,945 from the back tees over 235 acres that just two years ago the owner would move cattle across. Moore worked diligently to let the landscape dictate the routing of the course, and careful shaping helped to set a graceful flow to the first five holes as they climb towards the highest part of the layout.

"The site reminded me of Ireland when the hills are green in the early spring months," Moore said. "The cascading hills really helped to frame the holes, so I wanted to make a links-style course that was similar to the ones found there. The owner let us do what was necessary to make a good course. The landscape certainly made that easier."

True to the old-style courses, Roddy Ranch plays as a continuous loop rather than two nines playing back to a clubhouse. From the highest point of the course the downhill 570-yard par-5 sixth hole falls off of a hillside to a dramatic expanse. This hole became a design chal-

lenge, as wetlands dedicated that part of the hole to be rerouted. But in the end the grand tee view simply invites golfers to swing away.

### SUPERINTENDENT ONBOARD FROM START

Head superintendent Ken Schwark came on board in the fall of 1998 to help supervise construction and to supervise the grow-in. The course uses a variety of grasses, including bluegrass and rye fairways, fescue roughs, wild grasses in the natural areas, and A4 bentgrass for the greens.



The first hole at Roddy Ranch Golf Club

Schwark's presence from the start gave him input into such things as softening steep bunker faces to make for easier maintenance. He also was involved in creating the superlative greens at Roddy Ranch.

"During the construction phase I hired an Australian greenskeeper who used to work at Royal Melbourne Golf Club," Schwark said. "He presented to me a system for growing and maintaining bentgrass greens that will help to control the development of thatch and the proliferation of poa annua grass, which is a difficult challenge here in California. Right now the greens are firm, fast and true, and we intend to perfect them even more."

### RODEO CHAMP NOW INTO GOLF

Roddy Ranch has been open only since

November, but it has already drawn praise from players, not only for the beauty and challenge of the course but for the club's warm and friendly down-home attitude.

This is all a reflection of the owner, who has suddenly become a serious golfer himself. Although he has only played for two months, Roddy displays the natural athletic ability that helped to make him a two time world rodeo champion. In 1997, in fact, he was inducted into the Cowboy Hall of Fame.

"I never thought that golf would be a game I would like, but the simple economics of it was what first caught my

the American West so that it won't be lost to future generations."

### A LIVING MUSEUM TO OLD WEST

To this end Jack Roddy plans to make his course a living museum to the American West. He plans to build a hotel where families can stay while they play golf or ride through the 1,500 acres of land that he has managed to preserve, thanks to his golf revenues. He is a man with a vision as big as the sky his course lies under.

Jack Roddy's desire to do things right comes through in all aspects of the operation of the course, from the fact that he didn't open too early to the warm reception that each golfer receives. It is the greatest of ironies that this man, who is the embodiment of the cowboy and ranching, has turned to a game invented by sheepherders to save his lifestyle.

He is proud to be called a golfer today, and glad that golf can help to preserve one of the last stands of open space near a sprawling metropolis. ■

## Player moving on South America

PALMBEACH, Fla. — Gary Player Design (GPD) has signed a multi-year agreement with Caprile & Capdepon, a golf course design and construction company based in Buenos Aires. GPD plans to expand its presence in the growing Latin American market. Caprile & Capdepon has developed more than 50 golf courses in the last 30 years, including Martindale Country Club and Los Lagartos Country Club, in Buenos Aires. GPD will establish an office in Buenos Aires to coordinate communication and design services throughout South America.

## Pinehills to open 18 holes in spring

Continued from page 21

terrain has provided us with an opportunity to utilize the native ridges and high points for a variety of different tee and green sites," he said. "The valleys and swales provide the course with containment and relief from errant golf shots, while natural hazard locations give each hole its own identity."

The Nicklaus Design course will offer a totally different experience. "This spectacular property with its stately white pines, native vegetation and exciting topography allows us to create an extraordinary championship golf course," the designer said.

Both courses were designed to accommodate all levels of golfers. Four sets of tees allow courses to play from 5,388 yards to 7,175 yards, accommodating for beginners, yet challenging enough for the most expert player.

### THREE GOLF SCHOOLS ON SITE

Pinehills' practice facilities include a double-ended driving range with both natural grass and artificial turf tees, bunkered target greens with traps, numerous putting greens and separate chipping areas. State of the art instruction allows players to work on any aspect of their game through Pinehills Golf Academy, the Dave Pelz Short Game School and the Scott Sackett Golf Academy.

Opening this May, in conjunction with the Jones course, is the 12,000-square-foot clubhouse, designed by Childs, Bertman and Tseckares of Boston. Offering panoramic views of the facilities, the clubhouse will feature a pro shop, grille room, banquet pavilion, a Ryder Cup "function room," outdoor terrace dining and locker rooms. The building can accommodate groups from 20 to 288 for meeting and dining. ■



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