

# GOLF COURSE NEWS

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#### MACCURRACH GOLF ON A WINNING STREAK

MacCurrach Golf Construction claimed its second Golf Course News Large Builder of the Year Award at this year's show in Dallas. Glase Golf Construction won the top prize for the Small Builder of the Year. For these stories and a show wrap-up see page 27.

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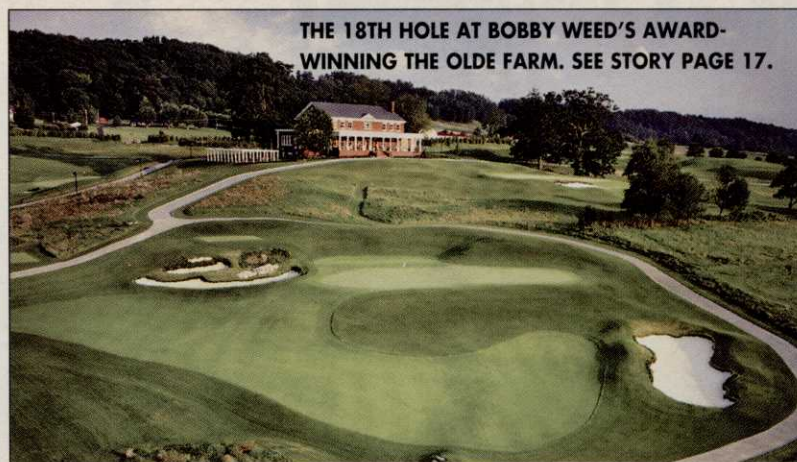
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PERIODICAL



THE 18TH HOLE AT BOBBY WEED'S AWARD-WINNING THE OLDE FARM. SEE STORY PAGE 17.

## Club Car and E-Z-GO enter adaptive golf car market

By ANDREW OVERBECK

AUGUSTA, Ga. — Citing a need to make golf courses more accessible, both Club Car and E-Z-GO have unveiled plans to enter the adaptive golf car market. The market for such adaptive cars is potentially huge according to the golf car manufacturers. Of the 50 million disabled people in the United States, four to seven million are potential golfers.

Versions of the companies' adaptive cars were rolled out at both the PGA show in Orlando and GCSAA show in Dallas, much to the delight of fellow competitors in the niche business who feel the entry of the "big two" will help to validate the need for the vehicles.

"For the past five years, I have

been saying that courses need to be purchasing these cars," said Nick Pike, president of Mobility Solutions in Southington, Ohio. "With Club Car and E-Z-GO getting involved, people will take more notice of the needs of handicapped golfers."

#### CLUB CAR

While the other companies in the market are primarily start-ups or spinoffs from larger mobility scooter concerns, both Club Car and E-Z-GO have formed strategic alliances to get an immediate foothold in the market.



A prototype of Club Car's 1-PASS in action

Club Car's 1-PASS vehicle will be manufactured by Englewood, Colo.-based SoloRider Industries, which has nearly eight years of experience in the field.

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## Ex-PGA president Addis launches Medallion Golf

By JAY FINEGAN

SAN DIEGO — Tom Addis III, president of the PGA of America in 1995 and '96, has teamed up with 14 other golf industry professionals to launch Medallion Golf, a full-service management firm. The new company, based here in San Diego, will train its marketing sights on California, Arizona, Nevada and Utah.

"My main goal is to have four to six facilities in our portfolio in the next two years, courses that we either own, lease or manage," said Addis, Medallion's president and operations chief. "We don't want to spread ourselves too thin while we're getting established. We plan to take a very hands-on approach to every project."

Addis has decades of salient experience.

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Tom Addis

## Developer bulldozing new Greg Norman course

By JAY FINEGAN

SCOTTSDALE, Ariz. — In one of the weirdest reversals ever seen in golf development, a brand new Greg Norman-designed layout here, Stonehaven Golf Course, will be bulldozed back to raw earth and rebuilt virtually from scratch under a plan by Tom Fazio.

Indeed, nearly everything about the property is changing — the owner, the developer, even the name. The new course is being called Mirabel Golf Club. Where Stonehaven was a daily-fee facility, Mirabel

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View of Norman's Stonehaven, a course never to be played

## Florida drought approaching crisis

By JOEL JOYNER

TALLAHASSEE, Fla. — In its third year of drought, the moisture-starved state of Florida has learned that the worst is yet to come.

Expecting little rainfall before May, as hot and dry weather patterns sweep across the region, golf courses in central Florida

will encounter more dry lake beds and harsher water restrictions.

"When the national drought people show a map of the continental United States, there's a huge bulls-eye that covers Florida from northern Orlando to

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## Florida drought

Continued from page 1

the Everglades," said James O'Brien, a Florida climatologist. The situation is little better farther north. The Atlanta region, for instance, is also in the grip of the drought and under tight water restrictions.

After a cool winter that denied most of the state any healthy tropical storms out of the Gulf of Mexico, Florida is once again in the midst of their "dry season" following three years of below-normal rainfall.

"Basically, we need a hurricane or an extremely wet tropical storm to possibly recover from this drought," said O'Brien. "Any golf courses depending on rainfall are probably not going to get it."

"They'll have to spend the money to water courses, and in some places even that may be difficult," he said. "Florida's also gaining about 2,000 more people every day. This increase in population, I think, is a major problem in regards to the water situation."

Indeed, If Florida is adding 2,000 people a day, or 730,000 a year, its population will rise 50 percent over the next 10 years to about 23 million. There is rising concern about the state's ability to handle huge immigration levels in light of the water shortages and falling water tables.

### SALT WATER INCURSION

High-stressed locations are evident along the coast, where the burgeoning population drains the aquifers. Greater amounts of ground water are depleted without being replaced with rainfall. As this resource dwindles, ocean water encroachment becomes a major worry for coastal cities like Daytona Beach that have already relocated wellfields inland because of salt water intrusion.

"Water quality is a key issue for superintendents throughout the state," said Todd Lowe at the USGA Green Section. "When we don't have adequate amounts of precipitation, salt accumulates in the soil and in the irrigation source."

"Cultural practices can only go so far to alleviate poor water quality and the turf eventually reaches a point where it cannot survive," Lowe added. "One solution for golf courses here in Florida may be to use Seashore paspalum, which can withstand salt water amounts up to 35,000 parts per million."

An October storm last year that dropped 20 inches of rain in a two-day period in south Florida was not enough to stabilize water levels. As the drought worsens, water prices are expected to climb and water gluttons throughout the state may find

their budgets parched.

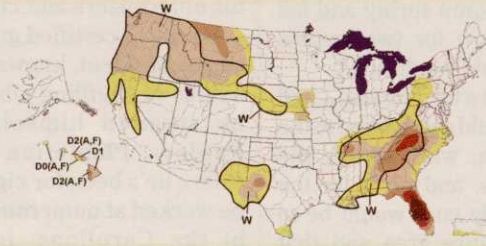
### ONE OF WORST IN HISTORY

The state is suffering from one of the worst droughts in its history with no relief in sight.

"Our tropical conditions require serious amounts of water to survive," said Bryan Plummer, superintendent at the Ironhorse Country Club in West Palm Beach. "Last year's rainfall totals were 20 inches below the previous year, and both years

### U.S. DROUGHT MONITOR

Red, brown and yellow shades show drought-affected regions



Source: National Drought Mitigation Center, Lincoln, Neb.

were below our normal yearly average.

The Ironhorse course, he said, is under a phase two, or "severe," water restriction. Plummer expects to soon face a phase three, or "extreme," situation.

"We can only water our greens and tees at night," he said. "Our even-numbered fairways and roughs are watered Wednesday

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## Houston water

Continued from page 9

courses to have an alternative source, other than ground water, in the next seven to 10 years," said Kane. "Increasing water pumping fees is a means to reach that goal.

"We're hoping to get an effluent water source from a development that's on the southside of us," Kane added. "There's a treat-

ment plant already in place, and we'd like to get its effluent. But there's a lot of red tape, with county agencies and such."

Another problem, he points out, is transporting the water. "Who pays the cost there?" Kane says. "It will probably be us. We have plenty of water now, but come next July and August we could be hurting."

### CATALYST FOR CHANGE

One course that has already

lined up an effluent supply is the privately owned Raveneaux Country Club, a 36-hole facility also here in Spring. Management has negotiated a seven-year agreement with a local treatment plant that produces some 3 million gallons per day.

"Raveneaux has contracted for up to half that amount," said Randy George, the recently departed Raveneaux superintendent who is now at Pine Forest

NORTH HOUSTON WATER COST PROJECTIONS					
MILLIONS OF GALLONS PER YEAR	50	\$60,000	\$125,000	\$250,000	\$1,000,000
	150	\$180,000	\$375,000	\$750,000	\$3,000,000
	200	\$240,000	\$500,000	\$1,000,000	\$4,000,000
	@	\$ .12	\$ .25	\$ .50	\$2.00
WATER PUMPAGE FEES (PER 1,000 GALLONS)					

Country Club. "Currently, the water will be available at no charge. But the associated cost of infrastructure will be absorbed

by the course.

"Before I left, the pipeline from the facility to the course was estimated to cost about \$300,000," he noted. "The water authority has also discussed the possibility of taxing the use of effluent water, as well. The tax would be a source of income to fund the authority's main objective of securing long-term surface water.

"The water use fee, from my point of view, will turn out to be a positive catalyst for change," he added. "These fees and the increases will motivate each and every course to better manage this limited resource or find an alternative answer."

As water rates keep rising, however, the hard financial reality will be reflected on the bottom lines of golf course balance sheets. ■

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## Florida drought worsens

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and Saturday nights only, and the odd ones Thursday and Sunday nights only. If things don't improve by spring, we'll be in serious trouble."

### LOW LAKE LEVELS

Cool winter temperatures may ease some of the water woes, but turf management adjustments can only be stretched so far. "We certainly do more handwatering," said Plummer. "We have portable sprinklers for mounds and excessively dry areas, granular wetting agents for our mounds, and there's been a reduction in our mowing schedule. The cooler weather enables us to get away with longer periods between mowings on our non-overseeded areas.

"Very low lake levels at this point worry me the most," he said. "Our course is approximately a foot below normal levels. This doesn't sound like much, but we have shallow lakes and only two recharge wells, which are controlled by the county."

This hard drought, which first hit the state in April 1998, is considered the worst since the 1930s, according to the National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), with 2000 as the driest year on record. "We finished low last year," said Tony Steppich, superintendent at the Golf Club of Jacksonville, "and we're not starting off so well this year, either. ■